

# **Ontologies and knowledges of autonomous resistances in Barcelona.**

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PHD

2018

**Ontologies and knowledges of autonomous resistances in Barcelona.**

**An ethnographic analysis of Can Batlló.**

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Submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities  
University of Bradford  
2018

# ONTOLOGIES AND KNOWLEDGES OF AUTONOMOUS RESISTANCES IN BARCELONA. AN ETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF CAN BATLLÓ.

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## ABSTRACT

*Keywords: Social theory, Social Movements, Resistance Movements, Autonomous Movements, Autoethnography, Feminist Methodology, Rhizome, Deleuze, Guattari, Barcelona, Can Batlló*

This research is born from a conscious reflection on the roles and judgements that traditional scientific analyses imprint in its objects of study, especially in the field of social movement theory. It aims to understand whether and, to which extent, autonomous resistances knowledges constructed on the ground challenge the academic interpretations of those movements. For this reason, the first part of this dissertation focuses on unravelling how traditional ontologies have been built and underpin majoritarian scientific analyses. Thus, I review most current debates in the field. Traditional social movement research tends to focus on dualist discussions related to new and old social movements, European and American approaches, behavioural or cost-benefits views, structural and agency approaches, identity-based interpretations, etc. In opposition to that, I argue for an ontology breaking with dualist views, placing Deleuze's concept of difference at the centre of my argument and feminist ontologies of the body as the medium affecting the political experience. I propose an autoethnographic method focused on presenting a cartography of urban resistance movements composed by difference and rhizomatic relationships in opposition to the homogenisation of ideas and demands of academic research for piling up patterns, variables or categories. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the BwO is presented here as a theoretical tool that helps to introduce the case study in relation with its contexts, relationships, affects and networks.

The second part of this research narrates and analyses how the proposed theory is unwrapped in the field. In doing so, I analyse my participation with and from within one of those collectives, Can Batlló and, more specifically, a project named La Fondona. Can Batlló is an autonomous and self-organised social

centre in the neighbourhood of La Bordeta in Barcelona with which I worked during six months between 2013 and 2014. Throughout this period, I participated actively not only in Can Batlló but also in the actions and events that took place in the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc and Barcelona. Hence, I present an analysis of the internal processes, relations and knowledge-practices as well as the relationships that this collective maintains with the community, its socio-political space and historical context. I argue those relations are constructed through rhizomatic principles as well as drawing from feminist approaches which put life and the body at the centre of their arguments. These outcomes will be finally reflected in chapter IX of this dissertation under the lenses of the research question posed in this thesis. That is whether current urban resistances challenge majoritarian social movements' analyses.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to the University of Bradford for providing invaluable support and alternative solutions for each of the unexpected events that have occurred during the process of this dissertation. I also need to thank the Marie Curie Fellow program and the University of Utrecht for the 6-months scholarship which allowed me to explore and focus in depth on this research.

This PhD would not have been possible without the patience and advice of my supervisor Dr Graeme Chesters especially his flexibility to deal with my eclectic ideas/mind. His guidance has accompanied me all this way.

Many thanks and love to my Bradford family who have provided the most beautiful memories I can recall in all these years. I enjoyed every party, film and dinners-gathering at Cecil Castle and Swinton as well as our endless discussions about epistemology and ontology with so many brilliant friends. I will keep Bradford and the people I have met there forever in my heart. I like to thank my Bradford family, especially Julia Ruppel, Laura O'Connor and Julia Smith for accompanying this journey with their advice, loads of laughter, silly jokes and cakes.

I would also like to thank my family and friends from El Grau for always reminding me of where I come from. They have provided unconditional support despite having no idea of what I am doing. They have listened to one, and each of my complaints, always answering with smiles and kindness, and some well-deserved “go over yourself” and down-to-earth advice.

My friends in Barcelona have accompanied the last part of this process. Mar Carrera and Andreu Solà have had to listen to every single detail of the final steps of this PhD while having, coffees, beers, dinners and countless events. For these reasons, I am thankful and also apologise.

Last but not least, I must thank all the friends of Can Batlló's who have welcomed me with open arms not only in terms of my research but also friendships. Their counsel has helped to shape my thoughts in this PhD. Finally, in these acknowledgements, I had promised I would write the name of my friend Ernesto Chacón with colours, glitter and sparks in the best RuPaul style, but since that is not possible, I hope I can make it with a few stars \*\*. Thank you so much, my friend.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

15-M	L.O.U
15 of May 2011,	Ley Orgánica de Universidades,
ABS	MST
Assemblea de Barri de Sants,	Movimeinto dos Treballadores
B.O.E.	Rurais Sem Terra,
Boletín Oficial del Estado,	NSM
CB	New Social Movements,
Can Batlló,	MTD
CDOC	Movimiento de Trabajadores
Centre de Documentació,	Desocupados
CIES	MML
Centre d'internament	Movimiento de Mujeres
d'estrangers,	Agropecuarias en Lucha
CNT	PAH
Confederación Nacional del	Plataforma de Afectados por la
Trabajo	Hipoteca,
CONV	PGM
Ordenanza de Medidas para	Pla General Metropolità,
Fomentar y Garanticas la	RCT
Convivencia Ciudadana	Rational Choice Theory,
DRY	RMT
Democracia Real Ya,	Resource Mobilisation Theories,
FOCIVESA	SI
Foment the Ciutat Vella S.A.,	Situationist International,
INDESCAT	TAZ
Institut Estadístic de Catalunya,	Temporary Autonomous Zone,
IWA	TMB
International Workers	Transports Metropolitans de
Association,	Barcelona

## I. INTRODUCTION

“We need the power of modern critical theories of how meanings and bodies are made, not in order to deny meanings, but in order to build meanings and bodies that have a chance for life”  
(Haraway, 1988 p. 580)

In current situations of trans-global crises, social dissent and related practices of resistance cut across conventional country boundaries. Expressions of dissent and resistance pursue change through unconventional practices not only to challenge current governance but to re-invent participation. They seek to impact society by transforming acquired values, subjectivities and knowledge. Despite these transformations of people's subjectivities, majoritarian theories examining social movements still focus on finding rational patterns that can be instrumentalised in data sets and produce generalisable theoretical outcomes.

This PhD problematises how social theory makes sense of collective action practices on the ground. Everyday non-discursive practices prove productivity-led theories' increasing disengagement with their object while challenging the excessive bureaucratisation of scientific knowledge (Lyotard, 1997). That is, people experiment collectively with their capacities, and create their own initiatives and identities which do not follow determined patterns but do-while-thinking. The dichotomist approach of majoritarian debates in collective action theory is here critically analysed by introducing the work of 'minor authors' and "radical theorists". The fundamental purpose of this research is to open a discussion space between the field of social action theories and activism knowledge, hence encouraging the creation of plateaus that blur academic boundaries and construct new subjectivities beyond "the indignity of speaking for others" (Deleuze in Foucault et al., 1977. p. 209).

Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's work on the Body without Organs, I reflect on resistance movements, a concept which will be explained in chapter III, as an undetermined body of determined assemblages and relationships constituting a self-organising machine driven by desires and passions anxious to experiment beyond the biopolitics of power and the dynamics of the capitalist market to which society is subjected. Scientific knowledge, I argue, is not an exception to this influence of capitalist society and as such should/must be challenged. Based on the experience of my participation in the collectives of Barcelona, I analyse how radical theory reflects on current social movements and

collectives. My research focuses in particular on the analyses of knowledges and practices produced by resistance collectives in Sants-Montjuïc and especially Can Batlló. This is a XIX century industrial compound occupied by the neighbours of La Bordeta (within Sants-Montjuïc district) on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011.

The first part of this thesis is dedicated to questioning classical theoretical insights regarding social phenomena (chapter II) toward which some analyses are still drawn. In so doing, I problematise traditional approaches such as Olson's Rational Choice Theory (1965), Resource Mobilisation Theories (McCarthy and Zald, 1977), collective behaviour theories (Gurr, 1970; Smelser, 1963; Turner and Killian, 1972) or Tilly's solidarity model as well as New Social Movements theories such as those coming from author such as Habermas (1976, 1985) and Offe (1985) among others. Likewise, I argue those theories remain stuck in dualist debates which cannot catch up with the speed of current resistances nor with their complexity. I briefly reflect on the work of those authors that focus their argument on structure and agency framework and try to link ontology with current movements epistemologies such as Giddens (1984), Bhaskar (1989, 1998) as well as Melucci's collective identity model (Melucci, 1989, 1996). At the same time, I propose the use of minor authors and radical approaches which see social movements in a different light, free from academic restraints. I look at these under the context of current social movements, taking as an example the Argentinian crisis of 2001 and the events of the 15 of the May in the Spanish State as well as introducing the case study of Can Batlló.

The second part of the theoretical analyses is covered in chapters III and IV. Chapter III focuses on the unravelling the construction of the ontological fundamentals of scientific knowledge. I begin this task by exploring the work of Foucault in *The Order of Things*, in which he analyses how thought is constructed by a progressive ordering, specialisation and mathematisation of language. I argue Foucault breaks with Descartes' ontological tradition and opens a space for new ontologies to be thought. I continue this criticism with Deleuze's concept of difference, which constitutes the basis of my own ontological approach. Deleuze frees difference from its submission to identity within the construction of a concept and puts it at the centre of his argument. Once thought is thought from the position of difference, the point of view of the thinking subject becomes irrelevant. At the same time difference per se or that what makes a difference is not a deviation but is integrated in the same consistency or plane of immanence

where it is self-organised beyond any imposed order or form. By doing this, Deleuze links ontology with epistemological thinking, thus thought is not something static but an action and movement. Movement is then embedded into thinking, thereby shaping the image of thought.

Chapter IV reflects on how the ontological understanding of difference is embedded in epistemological approaches and consequently, explores the work of feminist authors not as a differentiated field but as a position from which social theory needs to be reconsidered. In the first part of this chapter, I justify why it is necessary to include feminist approaches in the general field of social theory and not as a separated field. However, I argue that this isolation has enabled feminist theory to construct a more self-critical and self-reflective process which cannot be separated from its epistemologies and practices on the ground. As a consequence, current feminist ontologies are intrinsically linked to womanhood and sexual difference. These are feminist ontologies of the body. The second part of this chapter, however, briefly introduces the ontological debates these have gone through: from first wave feminism to second wave, equalitarian versus difference, to third wave debates coming from intersectionality, postcolonialist, queer and transfeminist approaches. Meanwhile, the last part of this chapter explains the embodiment of the theoretical approaches into feminist practices and why these are relevant for this thesis. I support these arguments with the work of authors such Irigaray (2000), Colebrook (2000), Braidotti (1993) and Haraway (1988) among others.

The analytical part of this dissertation, for the purpose of this explanation, is divided into three chapters; these are three fictional categories which are intermingled on the ground. The heterogeneity and complexity of relations developed by the actors of this case study cannot be divided into categorical groups since the boundaries between them are blurred. However, I have split the analyses into separated blocks to provide a more comprehensive understanding. Chapter VI introduces the reader to Barcelona's urbanism as well as the historical context of the Sants-Montjuïc neighbourhood and its resistances. I briefly describe the different urbanism models and the criticism they received which focuses mostly on the current fashion in urbanism marketing and city branding, that is, the smart city. These analyses are located within the context of a workshop I participated in during April 2014 in CB. The last part of the chapter introduces the historical background of CB highlighting the importance this

process has for the current situation. In so doing, I describe and explore the occupation strategy the neighbours used, as well as the key to their success.

Further chapters focus on the internal and the external relations of CB respectively. In chapter VII, I describe the processes and conflicts resulting from CB's heterogeneity and diversity. I explain CB's conceptual framework reflected in Figure 5, while introducing the different projects of CB and how people participate. The bulk of this chapter is focused on CB's assembly processes in which I have participated. At the same time, I explain some examples of the main conflicts I have experienced during those processes, such as the discussion of whether to have one or two general assemblies, separated between day to day decisions and thematic assemblies. Likewise, I introduce a section which focuses on how CB deals with gender and sexual diversity issues and what practices and methods are put in place. Finally, this chapter also engages with how CB relates to the institutions through the negotiation commissions and the main issues related to it.

The last chapter dedicated to CB's analysis (chapter VIII) focuses on the type of relationships CB develops with the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc as well as with allied projects in Barcelona and the Spanish State. I explore two events and examples of direct action that took place during my fieldwork. These are the demonstration against the fascist presence during the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 and the riots and actions that revolved around the eviction attempt of a squatted house named Can Vies. I participated in both of them, and for both, I provide a short background in order to understand how these events are deeply rooted in the history of neighbourhood resistances. CB was actively involved collectively as were its members individually: writing manifestos, accompanying meetings with authorities or supporting mediation processes as well as assisting in demonstrations and participating in the actions that took place. I conclude this chapter by introducing the last question I asked the interviewees which was related to CB's future and to how the members of CB perceive themselves and are perceived externally. Most of them, if not all, aspire to share and increase the knowledge and experience they have created. It is to this flow of knowledges and technologies/practices that I dedicate the beginning of the next chapter.

The final analytical chapter (IX) of this dissertation tries to wrap up all the other chapters mentioned above not as a conclusion but as a review of the reflective processes through which I have constructed this research. I, therefore,

re-examine the main question proposed here which is whether and how resistance movements' knowledges challenge the analyses of majoritarian social (movement) theories. Subsequently, I focus on the concept of knowledge and the legitimacy of its production as well as on the existing debates around it. As a result, I introduce Deleuze and Guattari's concept of minor authors which has guided my thought and which I have interchanged with other denominations such as Foucault's subjugated knowledge or Donna Haraway's situated knowledge. In so doing, I assess the importance of the feminist methodologies with which I have supported my own research. Finally, this chapter recalls the main outcomes of this research according to my experiences. I then explain and discuss the idea of the rhizomatic relations and the BwO—the lenses through which I have done this research— and provide examples of how CB and current resistance movements embrace these ideas. More specifically, I analyse the concept of the embodiment of resistances as a way of life in opposition to the marketisation of the body embedded into the capitalist system.

### **Research aims and contribution to the field**

This research takes a critical view of social theory and the sub-discipline of social movement studies, which sees movements as objects of analysis rather than producers of knowledge in their own right (Chesters, 2012). It begins with the premise that social phenomena analysts are not fully contemplating social movement participation in the quotidian practices of contemporary cities and their capacity for self-reflection and knowledge generation. Instead, these practices are largely dismissed because they fall outside the scope of 'majoritarian' academic analysis. This implies that social (movement) theory fails to understand the complexity of social movements because it continues to be based on external presumptions and regulations. This thesis contributes to social (movement) theory by analysing the role of theory and knowledge generation by movements themselves and their appropriation of and reflection upon radical theories from within and outside the academy. This is achieved methodologically by an in-depth study of how urban movements (resistance movements) engage in quotidian practices of resistance, self-reflection and theorisation as embedded in their own daily life. My case study to these ends focuses on the autonomous resistance movements of Barcelona and particularly on CB.

### *Research Objectives*

As mentioned above, the objective of this research is to problematise the current application of social theory to social movement phenomena and to open a space of analysis which values attempts to understand the role of activists' knowledge production in shaping, transforming and reinventing their social and political practices. Hence, providing for the recognition of (an)others' subjectivities beyond any enslavement to the idea of representation. It aims to interrogate the role current social movements have in producing non-discursive knowledge whose transformative capabilities go beyond traditional analysis. In so doing, it looks at activist practices in Barcelona and how minor literatures and activist knowledge are reflected on the ground, challenging traditional approaches to the analysis of social phenomena.

### **This research question and methodology**

The primary question this research seeks to answer is: **"In what ways do activist epistemologies challenge academic understandings of collective action?"**

The methodology used to answer this question has been a cause of concern and one of the main challenges I have experienced due to the existing tension between the theory and ethical principles supporting this research and the requirements of scientific research. Thus, I have carefully justified and reflected each methodological choice in chapter V. I initiated this research by participating in one of the projects that take place in CB. This project is called La Fondona. It is a feminist, LGTB+ and queer documentary centre which, like all the other groups, is not only organised into assemblies but also participates in the different group assemblies and activities that take place in Sants and CB. I have systematically collected data during over six months from mid-August 2013 to the beginning of April 2014. Theoretically, I follow an auto-ethnographic approach similar to the one used by other authors such as Graeber (2009) and Spry (2001), as well as the conceptual insights of Haraway (1988, 1997). In this way, I collect information about my experience as a participant instead of representing others. I explain the transformative processes between my relationships with the groups and the neighbourhoods as well as the ones perceived collectively in assemblies. Most of my data is extracted from assemblies, meetings, activities and workshops in which I have participated.



Other primary data such as interviews with activists, locals and workshops will be taken into account in order to corroborate or contradict my observations. I build on the assemblies' agendas, which are divided between those affecting the interrelations within groups and those that are intended to transform external relations, either with the neighbours, other collectives or institutions.

Secondary data, such as documents, articles and books produced by the different collectives are taken into account in order to contextualise Barcelona social movements' history and evaluate the construction of Can Batlló's symbolism. Altogether this provides a cartographic account of the different collectives and their embedded relationships. In so doing, I am able to explain how collectives relate to each other despite their rhizomatic behaviour, hence conforming to an aggregate of multiplicities and subjects which do not necessarily have a concrete and defined body, a Body without Organs.

My intention here is not to deny the efforts and good work of traditional academic analyses but rather to argue that social phenomena events need to be looked at separately and evaluated in their own right. Consequently, the conclusion of this research develops on these limitations and gives suggestions for future research. These complement the view exposed along these lines where I argue for the exploration of the embodiment of resistances as well as the development of more fluid concepts in accordance to the feminist precepts of current urban resistances in Barcelona.

## II. RE-THINKING SOCIAL THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

“(...) we are trying to reinvent and experiment as the best and more legitimate way to truly own our destiny, without the money dictatorship or the patronisation of the politicians. (...) The streets and the squares create a new language in order to express desire and collective emancipatory power” (Abrasad@s de Sol in ¡Indignados! 15M, 2011, p. 25)

Some time ago I presented a paper where I spoke about the 2011 mobilisations in Spain. I described the background of the 15<sup>th</sup> of May encampments on Plaza del Sol (Madrid) and Plaça Catalunya (Barcelona), focusing on the ways citizens without previous mobilisation experience constructed and engaged with participatory decision-making processes. A question formulated during the discussion time has remained with me since. One of the attendees compared 15 of May 2011 (15-M) movement with May 68. In his opinion, both movements led to the same problem of much ado about nothing. How could I say that this was not going to happen with the mobilisations in Spain? I did not have an answer for that question with the exception but answering that was also far from the pretensions of my analysis. I exposed an argument about peoples’ politics and participatory relations. Attempting to establish patterns and predictions within causality and rationalist theories would have automatically refuted my argument. I was talking about people’s acknowledgement of power (*pouvoir*) to experiment collectively with their capacities and construct their own initiatives and identities beyond rationalist and result-lead analyses. Achieving a common objective certainly would help; however, the relationships, lessons and experience coming out of their participation provide people with practical elements which have the potential to shape and transform their society as much as working towards a defined goal. I argue, those are the elements that contribute to long-term social change; hence they cannot/should not be dismissed.

The question I was asked somehow summarises the current problematic of social theory. On the one hand, it has become obvious how contemporary movements – especially after the 2010 protests such as the Arab Spring, the 15-M movement in Spain, the occupy movement, etc. – have widened and accentuated the legitimisation crisis of representative democracy within the capitalist system. Following Foucault’s idea of positive resistance, these increasing de-socialisation processes in which the state has embarked have opened opportunities for social mobilisation and transformation. On the other hand, mainstream approaches to social phenomena insist on developing rational-

thinking theories seeking to find a common thread explaining mobilisation at the cost of neglecting minor perspectives and other processes which walk hand in hand with the complexity and multiplicity of present movements.

I claim that social theories' discourses are often too static and lacking in the necessary plasticity that characterises current social movements. People's participation in recent protests has rather an experimental and nomadic character, encouraged by desires and possibilities opened by the 'unknown', with the certainty that any change will come from within peoples' struggles. Dismissing what Foucault called "disqualified knowledge" (Foucault, 2001), as the remark made during the presentation mentioned above implicitly suggests, misses what the motor of these movements is, their metamorphoses of power or, as Deleuze puts it, "becoming minor" processes (Deleuze, 2004). Social movements and autonomous resistances with which this research is occupied, are formed by people's experiences. They build political and cultural relationships and recover discussion and participation spaces which overcome present democratic practices, whether these are formally recognised by those of us doing social theory or not.

In keeping with these ideas, I explore how a 'revolt' is not only a failed attempt to change the world by the means of 'total revolution' as what it seemed to slip from my interlocutor's argument during the mentioned presentation, but it also is a composition of experiences that constitute the world, open spaces, and create and transform subjectivities. Thus, this chapter aims to provide a general overview to the problematic of social (movement) theory analyses as well as to introduce a justification of the research question that underpins this research, this being to what extent do current social movements challenge those analyses.

In doing so, firstly I review some approaches to the study of social phenomena. Secondly, I present what, in my opinion, is the most problematic feature of social action approaches. That is the excess of objectification, instrumentalization and categorisation in the search for operational patterns which dismiss non-fitting participants' knowledges and practices. The third section of this chapter analyses collective action in relation to opening moments/events/situations of action that cross-out the social. Collective action is seen here not as a mere *reaction*, but as a creative continuity seeking to highlight the cracks at the edges of the capitalist system (Holloway, 2010), and to inaugurate passages within the collective thinking.

I undertake this first analysis by looking at current social theories and militant researchers whose analysis tries to humanise social theory (Chesters, 2012) and conceptualises collective participation beyond the structural and rationalist debates, discovering “new possibilities with the present, turning bottlenecks and seeming dead-ends into new opportunities of joyful insurgency” (Shukaitis & Graeber, 2007, p. 12). Following Deleuze and Guattari (2004), I call for the deterritorialisation of majoritarian social action analyses if it wants to understand the transformational dynamics of today’s movements, the “modes of existence” of which go beyond the margins of rational objectification (Day, 2005, p. 175).

The final part of this chapter presents how the above-mentioned analytical approaches are reflected in current movements. On the one hand, I introduce here, among other examples from Latin America, the case of Spain taking the 15-M or the so-called *Indigandos* movement (*Indignadas* in its feminine version) as this may be a reasonably well known and a classic example of current social movements. I will argue that beyond the claims of 15-M events, this movement embodied, to a certain extent, a legitimating shift within the society, and especially within the general public, but which also points towards the need for an epistemological shift in the analysis.<sup>1</sup> The 15-M has represented the iceberg tip of many preceding actions and movements whose insights embody a deep transformation of people’s subjectivities, which, however, are not reflected in majoritarian analyses.

Finally, I briefly introduce a second example, the case study of this research. Can Batlló (CB) is an occupied industrial compound in Barcelona, the process of which transverses time and space of current mobilisations. Although, CB occupation was contemporary to the 15-M and probably was benefited by it, it provides a perfect example of the epistemological challenge argued here, and also of how the subject’s transformation transcends the event/situation. Both examples, together with others mentioned along this chapter represent the analytical challenge that this chapter claims.

### **Dualist debates in social theory and beyond: re-claiming spaces**

This section aims to critically examine the characteristics of mainstream

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<sup>1</sup> I will be referring at the protest in Spain during the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011 as 15-M movement and not as indignados.

approaches to the study of social phenomena and social movements. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, I argue that social theory is still strongly rooted in dualist debates despite recent attempts to promote a more inclusive framework. Thus, looking at the current protest movements arising since 2010, including the 'Arab Spring' mobilisations, the encampments in Spain, the Occupy Movement, Wisconsin Wave, etc., one may be tempted to search for explanations within the 'old' social movements' paradigms. For example, when analysing urban social movements in Spain and facing the need to understand and provide an explanation for those mobilisations, more recent scholars such as Gomà et al. (2002, 2018a, 2018b), Debelle et al. (2018) and others elaborate their argument based on Political Opportunity Structures (POS, EOP in Spanish acronyms). This is an analytical framework aiming to explain the complexity of contemporary social movements. It is conceived as an analytical tool which draws from classical social movements theory such as that from Tilly and Tarrow as well as "actors networks coming from governance and public policy theory" (Gomà et al. 2018b p. 31; Debelle et al. 2018). Despite the value of their analytical framework, this approach still focuses on measuring the impact and influence of those movements in public policy and democracy in general, as a way to measure the success of such or such movement.

Indeed, the idiosyncrasy of the political and social situation in some of the mobilisations mentioned above, together with the context of global crises, does the search for behavioural, structural and agency patterns, causalities and results very appealing. However, it is the specificity of those movements what should determine the analytical risk of constructing a unified thread attempting to baste the local singularities of each mobilisation into a common analysis. The term "opportunity" which some of the mentioned views refer (Ibid), implies a conscious decision and evaluation for mobilising (Martínez 2018). Nevertheless, while analysis is constructed focusing on that rational decision, it ignores those unconscious elements which affect mobilisations perhaps to the same extent. This dissertation has the will to enhance how those unacknowledged processes within the construction of the theory often offer a more open and mobile approach to the study of social movements. Nevertheless, this affirmation requires a critical review of classical social movements because, as per the authors above, they constitute the basis of many of the current perspectives.

Olson's (1965) Rational Choice Theory (RCT) posits that individuals'

mobilisation is the result of utility maximisation; mobilisation is reduced to a goal-oriented behaviour determined by certain constraints. In contrast, collective behaviour authors, such as Gurr (1970), Smelser (1963) and Turner and Killian (1972) individualised in grievances, ideology and discontent the reasons for protest behaviour (Opp, 2009 p. 127; Chesters & Welsh, 2011). Talcott Parson's (1961) Structural Functionalism Theory reinforced this approach and, together with Smelser's theory of Collective Behaviour, focussed on the structural conditions, such as political, economic and societal factors as determinants of the appearance of a social movement (Chesters and Welsh, 2011 p. 6).

These approaches influenced the resource mobilisation model, the principles of which are still widely applied by many authors. Resource Mobilisation Theory (RMT) was first formalised by McCarthy and Zald in an influential paper titled "Resource Mobilisation and Social Movements: A Partial Theory" (1977). These authors stated that a social movement is "a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represent preferences for changing some elements of social structure and/or reward distribution of a society" (McCarthy and Zald, 1977 p. 1217-1218). A "social movement organisation" refers then to that group capable of identifying its goals within the preferences of the movement and implements these interests consequently (ibid).

The above definition presumed to explain the emergence of collective action based on the capacity to state a commonly agreed set of conditions/preferences and arrange them within a rational-choice framework. Likewise, it presumes the capacity for individuals within social movements to act as entrepreneurs capable of making cost/benefit analysis of their choices. In his social psychological expansions of RMT, Klandermans partially acknowledges these critics of RTM, while taking into account the socio-psychological reasons for an individual to participate in an action that might not be collective yet (Klandermans, 1984 p. 585). Moreover, McCarthy and Zald recognised in a later work that their theory is constrained by the acceptance of scope conditions which are supposed to be characteristic of a free society, such as voluntarism, freedom of speech and press, etc. (cf. Opp, 2009 p. 128). But to determine and categorise what scope conditions are and how they are combined in order to reach an outcome (as well as what fits into their definition) goes back exactly to the root of the problem. That is, the excessive operationalisation and categorisation of social movement analyses.

Nevertheless, whether social movements are analysed from micro perspectives (by looking at agency), or from macro perspectives (by examining structural constraints), and in spite of RMT's explicit efforts to change this view, social movements are still implicitly assumed to be something breaking the normality, a deviance from society (Chesters & Welsh, 2011, p. 6). Even if there is a considerable effort from approaches such as Oberschall's (1973) breakdown theory, Tilly's solidarity model (Tilly, 1978), or from authors such as Tarrow (1998) to go beyond Olson's rationality and to examine other macro and cultural elements, current movements' diversity tends to escape classical sociological analysis in many cases.

The aim of these theories – mainly developed in the United States – continues to be providing a totalizing explanation by looking at foundational grounds of social movement. In some of these theories, there is an implicit assumption of a free society, which ignores the underlying powers and discourses conditioning social structures. Even though collective actors act rationally at some stage, this rationality cannot be generalised and categorised in a single theoretical approach that pretends to represent finite subjects. Rationalist-based approaches presume the continuity of rational thought as if these discursive processes would derive spontaneously from non-discursive practices. However, thinking and reflecting subjects are not necessarily related to the "rationality" assumptions of instrumentalist-led theories. Neither are they necessarily related to tactical thinking, success, leadership or reward aspirations which characterise these analyses.

In the European context, the analysis of social movements was led by a structure/motivation position grounded in classical Marxist traditions (cf. Althusser, 1997). From the 1960s, by drawing on European social theory and philosophical traditions, social theorists attempted to explain collective action from a post-industrial and post-materialistic perspective. This approach was anticipated by Roland Inglehart as he argued that once society's basic needs have been satisfied and "have attended a certain level of prosperity" (1971, p. 995) priorities and values change, giving birth to a new type of social claims (ibid).

Other authors, such as Melucci (1989, 1996), Habermas (1976, 1985), and Offe (1985), introduced the notion of New Social Movements (NSM) to the study of social movements. NSM theorists argue that social movements, especially after the events of May 1968, are characterised by 'new' strains and grievances

typical of post-industrial societies. The NSM approach is not homogenous, and there exist different variants, which give different weight to political and cultural elements (Buechler, 1995). For instance, Buechler differentiates between those authors that emphasise culture, such as Habermas or Melucci and those for whom political structures have a major influence, such as Castells or Touraine (ibid). However, taken together, NSM perspectives attempt to explain 'why' individuals who do not come from a labour or peasant mobilisation tradition and do not belong to marginalised sectors of society, decide to mobilise. In contrast to the more instrumentalist approaches briefly mentioned at the beginning of this section, NSM theorists focus more strongly on the analysis of frames, and on the construction of symbols and identities related to collective actions. Ultimately, while instrumentalist theories focus on 'how' or under which set of (external) conditions social movements emerge, NSM theories emphasise 'why' or, which are the internal conditions for social movements emerge.

Nonetheless, NSM approaches still examine social movements from an objective and neutral perspective. Social Movements are still observed from the outside, in order to find operational patterns that provide the world with a unitary theory. The complexity and multiplicity of subjectivities are compressed into general categories and variables imposed from an external and "neutral" point of view. NSM approaches ignore any form of knowledge coming from within the movements that breaks with the linearity of these patterns. Nevertheless, to say that feminist theories not only are dismissed from these analyses but are also cornered at the margins of the theoretical field as if their criticism would come from extra-terrestrials worlds that nothing have to do with social phenomena.

#### *Agency and structuralist debates*

As it is possible to note from this brief theoretical outline, the analysis of social movements seems to revolve around a series of dualist explanations, namely old vs new social movement paradigms, micro and macro levels, agency and structure, North American vs. European schools, political vs cultural approaches, rationalism and irrationalism, etc. Most of the debates among social theorists tend to be framed within agency and structuralists' views. While utilitarian models presume that political and economic reality is affected by structural variables, models based on the analysis of the cultural contexts question the type of society and its immobility (Martínez et al., 2012, p. 13).



Several authors have sought to put an end to these dualist debates between agency and structure. For instance, Habermas' critical theory conceptualises social action as the result of a disagreement between social structures and the democratic State. His structural Theory of Communicative Actions (1985) centres on aspects of agency, albeit it relies on the capacity of individuals to intervene critically in their own socio-historical reality (Saiedi, 1987, p. 252- 254). His critics reproach him for assuming the capacity of individuals to communicate, act and choose rationally and freely without entering in conflict, as well as for overlooking the complexity of the social phenomena (ibid p. 260; Buechler, 1995 p. 446). Others, such as Rorty, accuse Habermas of idealising reason and hope for enlightenment as opposed to imagination and 'aesthetics' (see Shusterman in Rorty, 2001, p. 135; Seidman & Alexander, 2001, p. 4). According to this view, Habermas' approach cannot explain agency beyond rationalist explanations. Similarly to RMT, and to POS authors mentioned at the beginning of this section, Habermas' approach explains social action on the basis of the capacity of individuals to rationally identify, to set strategies, identify political opportunity and engage in achieving their goals. Please note, the issue here is not related to people's capacities but the use of the concept of rationality and what that means as a common link among individuals who engage in mobilisations.

Identity theorists, such as Alberto Melucci, on the other hand, try to fill the gap between structuralist and agency approaches and the process that brings peoples together by focusing on how actors construct their "meanings, communicate, negotiate, and make decisions" (Melucci, 1996, p. 331). As Melucci puts it, "how certain individuals come to recognise themselves in a more or less shared sense of 'we'" (Melucci, 1989, p. 20). By doing so, Melucci moves beyond the dualism of the structuralist analyses and RMT to more epistemological approaches by explaining how collective action is built. The link between the previous approaches and the construction of collective action is maintained through the concept of identity. Melucci sees identity as "an interactive and shared definition produced by several interacting individuals who are concerned with the orientation of their action as well as the field of opportunities and constraints in which their action takes place" (ibid, p. 34). In particular, Melucci examines three dimensions of collective action. First, mutual recognition of the actors; second, the existence of a conflict or consensus; and last, a will to

transgress the limits or to adapt to the “decision-making” structures (ibid, p. 28).

However, criticisms of Melucci’s approach, such as the ones coming from Opp (2009), and from Gamson (1992), point out the lack of clarity in the operationalisation of the concept of collective identity. Interestingly, these criticisms show exactly what is the issue with social theory (see especially Opp, 2009), as they analyse his approach using a strongly rationalistic framework, and the concepts of efficiency, operationalisation, and standard categories (or the lack these) as an argument. Nevertheless, I argue these critics as well as Melucci in some sense, ignore the constructed character and the underlying power-related processes of the concept of identity. They presume that collective action is influenced only by one finite aspect of this identity. Likewise, they accept cost-benefit motivation as a normalised measurement standard in the analysis of collective action and a priori acknowledgment of the conditions for the construction of this ‘static’ identity. That is, they assume not only the actor’s capability of recognizing these relations of the ‘we’, but also to exist as such before the action takes place.

A current example illustrating my criticism of the concept of identity as a condition for analysing social movements lays on how many scholars identified the 15-M movement with that of *indignados*. This name was initially given by mainstream media such as Reuters relating participants of the 15-M with a recent book at that time written by Stephan Hessel’s, *Indignez-vous!* (2010). There is no prior condition evidencing that their identity as a whole was defined by the term of Indignados (no more than other emotions such as frustration, anger, desperation, etc.), nor did participants recognise themselves with such a concept prior to the mobilisation or was exclusively this sentiment the motor for the mobilisation. Despite all of that, Indignados is how the 15-M movement has been recognised (mostly among scholars and journalist outside Spain) (see O’Learly 2011, Postill 2014, Pentoulis and Thomassen 2013, Sanchez 2012 among many others). Moreover, during a conference given in the University of Bradford in 2011, one of the speakers tried to explain the use of this label by relating to it to the “temperamental character” of the Spaniards. Rest to say that such an affirmation invites the perpetuation of stereotypes and clichés improper of a “neutral” thoroughly analysis.

A sense of identity is important, but given the heterogeneity of current movements, it is difficult to consider whether it has such an impact in mobilising

grassroots such as the 15-M. Likewise, by focusing on one of the aspects of that identity, the authors mentioned above ignore the work of feminist scholars for which identity is multiple. This is, for instance, the case of the concept of intersectionality introduced by Kimberly Crenshaw in the context of a legal case on the 1989s. This has been used by feminist theories to describe how different oppressions and of class, gender, sexuality, racism, etc., hence also identities, are interrelated and cannot be separated from one another.

Other attempts to go beyond the agency-structure dualism may be found in the work of Giddens and Bhaskar. Giddens tries to overcome the structure-agency dualism by suggesting a model that combines subjectivism and objectivist theories (Giddens, 1984, p. xx). In his structuration theory, Giddens argues in favour of the importance of recognising the dialectical relation between structure and action (agency). Similarly, adopting a critical realist approach, Roy Bhaskar (1989, 1998) attempts to overcome this dualism through the idea of transcendental realism. Bhaskar's ontological perspective tries to reconcile realism with anti-foundational criticisms. The real is then "stratified" and divided between reality itself, the actual, and the empirical world. According to this view, the empirical world mediates between supposed objective reality and the world of our perceptions, the actual. The empirical, which refers to the characteristic observed in a determined event, is assumed to contain both possibilities. That is, what "can be" and what "will be," although Bhaskar does not pretend to exhaust or predetermine what "could" or "has happened" (Collier, 1994; Sayer, 2010). Bhaskar is concerned with uncovering the power structures that affect social behaviour; however, he understands power as 'capacity' or potential of what 'ought' to be (Collier, 1994, p. 26). Thus, he aims to emancipate the 'object' from its falsity and exclude from the analysis anything that is not consciously organised.

Even if Giddens and Bhaskar manage to escape the agency/structure dualism, they centre their conceptualisations on the discussion of the object-subject relationship. Graeme Chesters argues that while these are seen as promising ontologies, which presuppose a relational understanding between society and the individual, the link between their epistemology and their methodological explanations remains underdeveloped:

"Although Giddens demonstrably privileges a methodology that seeks to represent social phenomena in all their ontological richness, the

ontologically sensitised researcher, seeking guidance on co-producing knowledge, is left wondering how she/he might argue that what they are engaged in is in some way different from that approach of those who do not privilege ontology before epistemology” (Chesters, 2012, p. 4)

Ultimately, looking at the theories mentioned up to this point, some general criticisms may be formulated. In general, there is still a strong tendency to analyse social movements from a Resource Mobilisation and political opportunity perspectives by focusing on economic, rational and utilitarian explanations and operational outcomes. This issue has been pointed out by several authors. Burawoy for example, when reflecting on the discipline of sociology argues:

“The original passion for social justice, economic equality, human rights, sustainable environment, political freedom or simply a better world, that drew so many of us to sociology, is channelled into the pursuit of academic credentials. Progress becomes a battery of disciplinary techniques—standardized courses, validated reading lists, bureaucratic rankings, intensive examinations, literature reviews, tailored dissertations, refereed publications, the all-mighty CV, the job search, the tenure file, and then policing one’s colleagues and successors to make sure we all march in step.” (Burawoy 2005, p. 5-6)

Consequently, he differentiates between instrumental knowledge, which is founded on policy and professional sociology, and public and critical sociology, founded on reflexive knowledge (Burawoy 2005). Donatella della Porta, on the other hand, recognises “what is actually happening ‘on the ground’ [of social movements practises] is rarely studied” (2013, p. 2). More recently, and recognising the need for theory to take into account activist self-reflexion and views, authors such as Martínez (2007, 2018), Debelle (2018) or Ibarra (2012) articulate different theoretical framework which combine the analysis of socio-spatial structures (Political Opportunity Structures) and agency with temporal frames such as cycles, waves, etc. Even if these theories succeed in bridging ontological and epistemological practices, they still try to frame social phenomena within conceptual frameworks which are, by definition, static. Focusing, as mentioned previously, on whether there is any measurable outcome, or whether a mobilisation belongs to a temporal cycle or another, implies trying to fix that

what is fluid on the ground, as well as, to judge and make assumptions about its classification. Those observations can only be made a posterior and from an external position.

Meanwhile, Ross accuses rationalist choices of seeing themselves as the “tribunal” to decide and judge what is real (Ross, 2002, p. 4). Non-economical and non-rational choices are excluded from these decisions. Hence, majoritarian theories fail to provide real accountability for the mobility of the “event” (ibid) on the ground. As Scholl points out, the use of “rigid conceptual frameworks freeze the activities of actual people who live in a world of emerging and changing relationships” (Scholl, 2012 p. 15). This, for example, he continues, pushes us to believe that “a social movement is “thing” that exists” (ibid)

Likewise, Steven Seidman points out that sociological theory “has lost most of its social and intellectual importance” due its increasing disengagement with conflict and debates taking place in the current public sphere. Thus, theory “has turned inwards and is largely self-referential” (Seidman, 1997, p. 43). For this author, sociological theory needs to abandon the idea of discovering a totalizing rational-model that explains society, in favour of a “social theory” that “opens present and future possibilities, detecting fluidity and porousness in forms of life where hegemonic discourses posit closure and frozen, natural social order” (ibid, 1997, p. 44).

In keeping with the criticisms illustrated here, I argue that there is a need for a shift in social theory studies that opens the debate to the knowledge-praxis that has been left unexplored. Current social movements escape the stratifications and categorisations required by classic ‘scientific’ academic knowledge. There is thus the necessity to break with these discourses in order to encounter different theoretical possibilities that would enable the explanation of the transformative processes of current social movements. The next section explores the work of authors that acknowledge this emancipatory necessity and argue in favour of an epistemological shift along these lines.

### **The unsocial of the social theory**

Building on the criticisms mentioned above, the rest of this chapter will elaborate on the approaches claiming to abandon the underlying presumption of the finite and unity of collective subjects, in favour of the multiplicity that social movements show on the ground. These views, as it will be developed in further chapters, constitute the underlying principles through which this dissertation is

constructed. Many critics have pointed out that there is an increasing disengagement of sociological theory from its object of study. Post-structuralist and post-materialist approaches, such as those from Lyotard (1997), Foucault and Deleuze (in Foucault et al., 1977), post-modernism authors (Seidman 1997, 2001; Baudrillard 1995) as well as feminist theorists - as I will expand in further chapters - (Butler 1990; Braidotti 2012; Irigaray 2002, etc) point out not only the self-referential and instrumental character of sociological theory, but also its stubborn pursuit of an ideal of hetero-patriarchal normative regulation of knowledge in which (sexual) difference and ambiguity have no place. Luce Irigaray, in her work *To Speak is Never Neutral* (2002) dedicated a chapter to the scientific language ("Is the subject of Science Sexed?") questions:

"How does one talk with scientists? Moreover, with scientists from different disciplines? Each constituting a world, and every system of each one of these worlds striving to be global at any given point in time. At any moment, then, each one of these worlds is organised in a totalised way, closed off. How can one reopen these universes so that they may encounter each other, talk with each other? In what language? According to what mode of discourse?" (Irigaray, 2002: 247).

In other words, she asks the reader and herself what the responsibility of the academic and institutional discourse in relation to the constitution of the subject and, more specifically, of gender is. Social theory approaches are mostly written by western, white, heterosexual male. Feminist insights are only considered within their field and their contributions to the general social theory rarely considered. Foucault makes a similar remark, referring to the responsibility of intellectuals as "agents" of the system of power, "the idea of their responsibility for "consciousness" and discourse forms part of the system" (Foucault et al., 1977, p. 207). Intellectuals are no longer representative of people's subjectivities. Individuals are capable of representing themselves in spite of the existence of "a system of power which blocks, prohibits, and invalidates this discourse and this knowledge" (ibid). This is clear when checking how movements such as the 15-M and, to some extent, the demonstrations during the Argentinian crisis in 2001 make a strong statement not only against representative democracy but also rejecting any representation coming from the media, political leadership or enlightened intellectuals. This implied, according to Castells, "a paradigm shift in

the relationship between citizen and governments, unions, media outlets...” (Castells, 2012 p. 121)

Thus, to provide an account of the dynamism of the transformative and reflexive knowledge of the social-space requires going beyond the analysis within the steadiness of majoritarian theories. The role of the intellectual (researcher) is then to fight against the “forms of power” (ibid) that convert him/her in part of this game. In order to do so, it is necessary to creatively re-take power by re-claiming spaces and open social theory to the risk of having these discussions which is, precisely, the object of this research.

Accordingly, I turn now to the work of authors such as Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari and feminist theory, and the work of those referred to as “minor authors” (Deleuze et al. 1983; Deleuze and Guattari 2004) whose approaches escape the structure/agency dichotomy (Fox, 1998 p. 415) of previous theories. I attempt to unthink social science (Scholl, 2012; Holloway, 2002) by analysing theories on the ‘margins’ as situated on a multiplicity of experiences. In this sense, I borrow from Foucault's notion of ontology the idea that power/knowledge is not only constituted by rules of discursive formations as something repressive, but also by “non-discursive practices,” which are, on the contrary, productive processes that enable the creation of human capacity (Fox, 1998 p. 416; Butler, 1990 p. 139). Foucault breaks with structuralist ideas by thinking of power beyond its coercive expression and, with agency-centred approaches that “de-centre the individual” (Fox, 1998 p. 41). Power/knowledge is then the link that puts in relation discourses and non-discursive practices (ibid).

Similarly, drawing from Simone de Beauvoir's work, feminist materialism (beyond the Anglo-American deconstructionist approaches from Butler and Scott (1992)) has overcome these dualisms by producing creative alternatives of a sexually “embodied and embedded kind” which Braidotti names “figurations”. These are “ways of expressing different subject positions” that “render the non-unitary image of a multi-layered subject” (Braidotti, 2012 p. 13- 15). This crisis of the subject becomes then a central argument within critical authors. The problem is then how to represent this non-linear fluidity “in-between flows of data, experience and, information” since in our thinking processes the idea of objectivity and linearity still prevails (ibid).

Deleuze and Guattari's work expand on this point by seeing the social as an “abstract machine” which “draws lines of continuous variation” (Deleuze &

Guattari, 2004 p. 110). This machine refers to the dynamics through which transformations are produced. They name these lines of change and creation “lines of flight”. The “abstract machine” is then singular (as particular) and does not contain the signs, interpretations and subjectivities to which stratification is human being bound (ibid, 2004, p. 148). However, it is necessarily bound to the “diagram of assemblages” which is collective and concrete, “treats variables and organises their highly diverse relations as a function of those lines” (ibid, 2004 p. 111).

Social movements authors have more recently adopted assemblage thinking in order to answer the problems posited by classical approaches. It provides a useful method to look at the processes and compositions of the socio-spatial phenomena sensitive to change, heterogeneity, difference and practices on the ground (Anderson et al. 2012). However, here I will follow Deleuze’s definition of assembly which is closer to the French concept of *agencement* and refers to the action of distributing. Assemblage is considered as a verb and not as a noun. Thus, assemblage according to Deleuze is:

“a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them across ages, sexes and reigns – different natures. Thus, the assemblage’s only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a “sympathy”” (Deleuze and Parnet, 1977 p. 52)

It is in this sense that this dissertation understands current social movements and more specifically, the case study of Can Batlló which I will mention later. Assemblages are also related to the level of deterritorialisation and determine which lines will form part of a set of rules or which will be part of the “fluid matter” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004 p. 111). Social action should work from the inside to the outside, aiming to ‘become’ fluid matter, to metamorphose and to bring lines of flight to the margins of the plane of consistency by undoing the territorial strata. Experimentation, then, becomes a synonym of movement, occupying spaces, inventing lines of flight and passages fuelled by the desire and passion of ontological becoming. It is in this sense that movement is necessarily rhizomatic; it has no beginning or end, is horizontal, multiple and non-hierarchical in



opposition to the vertical relations of arborescent forms.<sup>2</sup> This implies stripping the subject “of its old genderised, racialised, normalised straitjacket and relocated into patterns of different becomings” (Braidotti, 2012 p. 21).

However, the process of ‘becoming’ occurs from the interior to the exterior through infinite sequences of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, that is through conflictual processes between rhizomatic and arboreal (hierarchical) constructions. Accordingly, an action is rarely completely rhizomatic. It is the fluid matter mentioned before, which escapes the arborescent stratification in order to move to the next sequence. The Body without Organs (BwO) which represents the “absolute” deterritorialisation, is constituted by infinite matter, is the result of a rhizomatic transformation, and, hence, a multiplicity (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004 p. 148) in itself. These authors argue in favour of the nomadic movement of deterritorialisation of the subject, which can only be achieved by becoming ‘minor’, pushing resistance and tensors to the margins.

Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of ‘nomadic’ and ‘becoming’ are referential for those authors who put movement at the centre of their thinking, such as Rosi Braidotti. For Braidotti (2012 p. 3), nomadic theory refers simultaneously to a “monistic vision of matter” and to the “no unitary vision of the subject” which is defined by its motion. Monistic matter is here understood as the embodiment of mind beyond Cartesian dualism. Thought is not only composed of organic, human and rational consciousness (ibid) but by non-rational and inorganic elements whose relationship is nomadic and transformative.

Contradicting this view, Badiou (2000) simplifies Deleuze’s multiplicity to a *Spinozist*’ theory of *being(s)*, the *One* (true substance) in opposition to the many (multiple) (Roffe, 2012). However, Badiou’s criticism is based on axiomatic interpretations of Deleuze’s multiplicity. While Badiou bases the concept of multiplicity on axiomatic sets dismissing the role of problematic (event), Deleuze defends the co-dependency of both. To adjust to the rigour of axiomatic sets necessarily implies to select and exclude and thus eliminate events.

These different ontological perspectives are at the heart of the social theory discussion pretended in this research, what Deleuze refers to “royal” and “nomad” or “minor science” (Smith, 2003 p. 3-4; Deleuze and Guattari, 2004).

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<sup>2</sup> Deleuze and Guattari borrow the concept of rhizomatic from biology language. It refers to the characteristics the roots of some plants possess by which if separated into pieces any of the parts will give rise to a new plant.

The “royal” perspective has been dominant in the analysis of social movements, degrading and eliminating “minor” approaches. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the event in its own right is leading the analysis of current movements to different, more plastic and inclusive approaches. In an article titled “May 68 did not take place”, Deleuze and Guattari argue against the irreducibility of the event:

“An event can be turned around, repressed, co-opted, betrayed, but still something survives that cannot be outdated. Only traitors could say it is outdated. Even ancient, an event can never be outdated. It is an opening onto the possible. It enters as much into the interior of individuals as into the depth of society” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2001 p. 209)

Looking at it from the point of view that movements do not require from representation, the irreducibility of the event into a conceptual framework and the possibility of it affecting not only individuals but also the social-space, justifies the need for theory to be rethought under different lenses in which primes the analysis of co-functioning and symbiotic processes. Within the field of social movements, this epistemological (and ontological to a certain degree) shift of the theory is being recognised by several authors. From the Latin-American perspective, Martínez et al. (2012) argue that movements’ practices on the ground overcome theoretical analyses. Movements engage in an emancipatory process and knowledge of reality of which the source is outside western academic influence (Martínez et al., 2012 p. 18- 19).

Martínez et al. (2012) and Hoertmer (2009) among others situate the origin of this epistemological shift around the '90s with the *Zapatistas* movements, the *Piqueteros* in Argentina (mid 1990s), the *Movimiento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST) in Brazil, the Zapatista uprising in 1994 or the indigenous and peasant movements in Bolivia. The difference, according to them, is due to the fact that these movements are “constructed at the margins of the modern world” through a process(es) of rupture and liberation from the western society (*ibid*). This process is not only limited to some specific fields but claims to have a multidimensional character that affects all the areas of the social and political life and therefore is seen as endless and in construction. Raúl Zibechi, to give a specific example, sees these theories underlying what he calls the ‘Aymara revolution’:

“The Aymara experience is not only linked with the continental struggles,

but it also adds something substantial- the construction of actual non-state powers. By this, I am referring to powers that are not separated from or splintered off from society (...) in the Aymara world this capacity is distributed and dispersed through the social body and ultimately subject to assemblies in the countryside and the city.(...) The non-state powers of the Aymara were born in territories in which the community machine operates: social mechanisms that are de-territorialised and ‘de-communalised’ in order to be used by society in movement as non-state forms of mobilisation and to create space where- far beyond mere rhetoric- the dictum ‘to lead by obeying’ functions.” (Zibechi, 2010, p. 7)

The treatment of the event lays then at the centre of the claimed shift, not only because it represents the dispute about how social movement theory should analyse it but also because the composition of the event goes beyond the traditional understanding of social movements. The event cannot only be seen as a fixed object externally affected by its circumstances but as a fluidity of transformative practices, collaborations and relationships affecting people’s lives and which cannot be contained in a set of conditions because do not depend from an (expert) external view, but of people’s subjectivity. In the next section, I expand with further examples from autonomous resistances in Latin America and Spain and the way these discussions engage on the ground. Similarly to other authors (Chesters 2012; Day, 2005; Biddle, Shukaitis and Graeber 2007; Martínez et al. 2012; Urry 2003), I agree that, especially since the late 1990s and probably already with the autonomous movements on the 1960s and 1970s, there is an epistemological shift for which social movements need to be analysed by focusing on the idea of deterritorialisation, innovation and experimentation but also by looking at their differences and exceptions that resist categorisation within social theory.

### **The becoming of new protagonism**

“All of them must go” (“que se vayan todos”) was one of the most chanted slogans on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2001 in the highlight of the mobilisations against the Argentinian crisis. Likewise, 10 years later in Spain during the demonstrations of the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2011, people repeated similar slogans: “they do not represent us” (“no nos representan”). Although many years

had passed, there are plenty of activist knowledge-practices and symbolisms that link the two events. See, for example, the protest methods between the *piqueteros* movement during the mid 1990s and the Asturian (Spain) miners in July 2012, or the *escraches* that the Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH is a platform that gives support to people threatened with being evicted from their homes as they cannot pay their mortgages) engage in. Even though, there were elements of spontaneity in the 15-M protest mobilisations in Spain and in December 2001 in Argentina, these protests did not appear from nowhere; there is an extensive and diverse background of mobilisations that preceded and transformed by these movements. As mentioned in the previous sections, a social movement is not constituted as an object in isolation, but its practices and resistances technologies have been influenced by its relationship with other movements and events. In words of Deleuze and Parnet conversations:

“If one takes this exteriority of relations as a conducting wire or as a line, one sees a very strange world unfold, fragment by fragment: a Harlequin’s jacket or patchwork, made up of solid parts and voids, blocs and ruptures, attractions and divisions, nuances and bluntnesses, conjunctions and separations, alternations and interweavings, additions which never reach a total and subtractions whose remainder is never fixed.” (Deleuze and Parnet, 1977 p. 41)

This section will precisely talk about those “voids” and “interweavings” that conform new subjectivities, assemblages and bodies through the flows which permeate events and its impasses. I refer back to the idea of autonomous organisation and its epistemologies which has characterised a multiplicity of resistances which have influenced (and will continue to do so) many movements to come. So, one can go back to the indigenous uprising in Ecuador, the Caracazo in Venezuela (1989), the march for the territory in the 1990s in Bolivia, or its equally well-known water and gas wars in 2000s, the Zapatistas movement upraise in 1994, the globalisation of protests thanks to the alter-globalisation movements, Seattle (1999), Génova (2001), etc (Hoetmer, 2009 p. 86). Resulting from their struggle against the neoliberal context is evident that those movements have promoted new political subjectivities, a cultural transformation of social action and the opening to emancipatory processes that politicians, media economic leaders and academics are obliged to acknowledge in order to be able

to comprehend their dynamics. De Sousa Santos call those movements the “Counterhegemonic Globalisation” (De Sousa Santos, 2003) as a way to produce alternative forms of life and relations to the capitalist model of society (Hoetmer, 2009 p.95).

In Argentina, Di Marco refers to Mothers and Grandmothers of Mayo Square, “whose political practices arose from an individual pain and became an open rebellion against the military government”, as precursors of human rights movements in this country (Di Marco, 2009 p. 45). Motherhood became socialised and redefined by the politicisation of this movement. Equally, the piqueteros movements and the movements that took place during the 1990s became also the breeding ground from the mobilisations during the crisis. Piqueteros refer to those who picket cutting roads, and, in this case, it is important to highlight their organisation around Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTD, Movement of Unemployed Workers in English), Movimiento de Mujeres Agropecuarias en Lucha (MML, Movement of Women Farmers in Fight), companies recovered and self-managed by workers who are known as ERA, among others. Pickets, neighbourhoods’ assemblies and occupation of factories constitute some of the practices that influenced later on the protests against the 2001 crisis (Di Marco, 2009 p. 46- 48). The word *corralito*, an economic term born from the Argentinian crisis for which people's accounts in banks were almost frozen, was many years later, during 2008 crisis, repeated (and still is) to exhaustion in the Spanish media, as a threat in the shadows (McCoy, *El Confidencial* on 31st of July 2008; *Público*, 14th of May 2012).

Occupations were also a strategy used by the MST in Brazil in their fight for the territory and the agrarian reform. However, those strategies and actions drew from multiple struggles linked to the history of Brazil such as the resistances from the indigenous and the black communities coming from what used to be named *Quilombos* (territories where slaves and other persecuted communities took refuge in Colonial times). MST is the beneficiary of a long history of resistance for the territory which around the 1980s managed to agglutinate the identity of those for whom the access to the land was denied (Prevot and Coelho Fernandes, 2009 p. 137- 139). Likewise, the birth of MST was contextualised by mobilisations in favour of the democracy which characterised the Latin American continent at that time. Thus, the analysis of the MST should be seen as the result of past and present conjunctures.

In Spain, recent mobilisations could be referred to the demonstrations against the *Ley Orgánica de Universidades* (L.O.U.) (Organic University Law) of 2001; the movements *Nunca Mais* (Never Again), born as a consequence of the oil spill of *Prestige*, a single-hulled oil tanker that sank in front of the Galicia coastline in November 2002; the campaign against the Iraq war in 2003; the demonstrations against the Partido Popular (People's Party) after the Madrid Bombings on 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2004; the students movement against the *Bologna Plan* and, more recent movements in favour of a dignifying home; the Wikileaks phenomenon and the demonstration on March 2011 against the anti-piracy law, known as *Ley Sinde*. All this constituted a brew of synergies which, together with the 15-M, would construct the symbolism and substrate for the mobilisations to come.

I do not try to compare the 15-M events in Spain and the Argentinian crisis, neither it is the object of this dissertation to find similitudes with other Latin American movements, nor with more recent mobilisations such as the occupied movement, the Arab spring etc. This is because each event deserves to be analysed in its own right; however, there are numerous homologies and lessons worth to mention. In a sense, those movements represent a cutting-point in the linearity of history where events and voids are weaved together but without any particular form. That is, I attempt to de-construct the lines of transversal continuity that intervene in the production of subjectivities contained by those actions despite their distance in space and time. This production of subjectivities is, according to Negri, the result of the accumulation and sedimentation of other subjectivities and events (Negri et al., 2008). Peoples' reaction to the Argentinian crisis in 2001 and the protest of 15-M events taken as an example represent two moments/situations that cut across the plane of consistency, create lines of flight that go beyond the hierarchic elaboration of rationalist approaches caught off guard. To put it in Deleuze and Guattari's words, I explore the multiplicity of rhizomatic assemblages that have deterritorialised and territorialised the Argentinian and Spanish social space multiple times.

Deleuze's and Foucault's, in their conversations about Intellectuals and Power, argue that "from the moment that a theory moves into its proper domain, it begins to encounter obstacles, walls, and blockages which require its relay by another type of discourse [...] No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practices are necessary for piercing this wall" (Foucault

et al., 1977 p. 2006). In that sense, these events, and particularly the 15-M in Spain to which I will be referring later, inaugurate the visualisation of alternatives (at least to the eyes of social movements' theorists), experiences and knowledge-practices, innovations motivated from within the society. Thus, I will refer to these practices on the ground which "pierces the wall".

Christian Scholl, in his work *Two Sides of the Barricade* (2012), analyses summit protests from a similar perspective, as "events that constitute possibilities" (2012 p. 6). He anchors his argument on Deleuze and Guattari's idea that events cannot be outdated as they are open (or openings) to the possible (ibid). I shall take the same approach here and see these events as initiators or reinvigorations of social transformative processes. These shifts, on the one hand, have translated into a different type of actions where the politics of demand gives way to politics of the act. It seems then that there is a non-verbalised agreement of some scholars on approaching the analyses of the recent social movements from a different perspective, beyond traditional mainstream views. Scholl, as other materialist theorists, such as Braidotti (2012), conceptualises these politics as a "product of doing" (Scholl, 2012 p. 7). While following once again Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, it can be said that one of the main features of this 'doing' is their horizontal character (at least at some point of their process) through which the construct of rhizomatic relationships is formed (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004).<sup>3</sup> As it has been said before, no movement is purely rhizomatic, but determined by spaces and time. However, the event is the "situation" of cut, where non-discursive practices flow through the pierced wall and escape rationality.

This is the moment of absolute deterritorialisation. What is "contained" in this situation and its outcome cannot be fixed in a theory, as it is movement in itself. Therefore, in the same way that talking about the present-time is part of a linguistic agreement; diagrams of assemblages reterritorialise and rationalise movements just to deterritorialise again within a new event. *Colectivo Situaciones* calls this type of movement *new protagonism*. This is not a "new subject" as it does not reach such a consistency. Rather, it moves within multiplicity but is delimited by its situations (Colectivo Situaciones, 2002 p. 38). As I shall later

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<sup>3</sup> The fact that there is no recognisable leadership confused the media, especially during the events of 15-M where "not even spokespersons were recognised" (Castells, 2012:129). This was however not new; we need to go back to Seattle in 1999 to and remember how the media broadcast about what was happening in the streets.

illustrate with examples, the difference between this “new” tendency and NSM theory lies in this heterogeneity and rhizomatic behaviour as well as in the more inclusive nature of these movements. Martínez et al. (2012) find the key to this difference in the emancipatory character of these movements. The action does not come from the outside but from within the margins, it has no concrete form, and yet it is transformative. Such fluidity goes beyond rational claims influenced by capitalist views of the world.

Recently, researchers have started to make use of the term ‘rhizomatic’ to refer to the form that social movements take. Thus, Chesters and Welsh (2006) use this notion of referring to the manner in which anti-globalisation movements engage with action. Following these authors, Castells also refers to the 15-M as a “rhizomatic revolution” (Castells, 2012, p. 110- 155). Accordingly, these movements resist being branded and escape traditional strategies and tactical explanations at the same time that they reject acting through hegemonic forms of action (Day, 2005, p. 8-9). Hence, to understand these movements is to understand the on-going shift of Gramscian hegemonic explanation by affinity forms (ibid). That means going beyond explanations for which the social struggle is conditioned by the concept of bourgeois hegemony underlying all spheres of the political and social life.

On the other hand, these examples can be framed within a context of economic and political crises. The slogans mentioned at the beginning of this section embody the increasing disagreement between the State and the supposed sovereignty powers where political legitimacy rests. State sovereignty has been transferred to the market flows, which forces us to re-think the Hobbesian state of nature (Colectivo Situaciones, 2002, p. 34). Argentinean economist, Marcelo Matellanes said, “It is the failure of a socialisation project which is very different to a simple economic crisis, even if someone insists in its structural characteristics” (Matellanes, 2003, p. 28-29). While the state has been involved in its own de-socialisation, the market regulation technologies have conformed societies of control (Deleuze, 2004). Post-industrial societies have become enormously flexible towards differences and peoples’ demands, which have been transfigured in consumption capabilities. The system has no long-term planning other than the accumulation of profit. However, the number of people excluded from consumerism’s privileges has increased dramatically, thus breaking the necessary neo-liberal balance between market subjects and the



invisible excluded (Colectivo Situaciones, 2002, p. 37). These consumer capabilities cannot be further guaranteed; neither can the state meet peoples' demands any longer because its possibilities of action, especially in western societies, are tied to those of the global market.<sup>4</sup> The bourgeois hegemony guaranteed by the state and institutions cannot be supported any longer. Consequently, the disarticulation of social bonds leads to the opening of alternatives and possibilities. Societies take charge of their own struggle. That is, in a sense, what John Holloway has called the method of crack:

“The method of crack is dialectical, not in the sense of presenting a neat flow of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, but in the sense of a negative dialectics, dialectic of misfitting. (...) The method of the crack is the method of the crisis: we wish to understand capitalism not as domination, but from the perspective of its crisis, its contradictions, its weakness, and we want to understand how we ourselves are those contradictions” (Holloway, 2010, p. 9)

Thus, both the reactions to the Argentinian crisis and the 15-M as well as the other mobilisations mentioned in this section, have produced a spatial-temporal interruption which cannot be interpreted beyond the limits of its experience and creations of possibilities. Although those movements have opened the door to a transformational existence and indeed facilitated the rise of some left-wing governments, in the following years, the threats of continuing with neoliberal policies, cooptation and fragmentation are still present. Thus, in Argentina the piquereos' movement was co-opted by the state or split into different groups, the Madres of Plaza de Mayo was accused of institutionalisation, and many neighbours' assemblies disappeared. However, multiple collectives and groups have been created in order to fight against the new neoliberal model (Zibecchi, 2009 188 – 189). In Chile, the Mapuche' movement has multiplied and traced alliances with the students, syndicates, women and urban collectives (Ibid).

In Spain, new political parties such as Podemos or Barcelona Comú have co-opted many of the 15-M demands. However, many other collectives based on autonomous principles work in-between the shadows offering alternatives of life

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<sup>4</sup> This argument should be contextualised because it is obvious that the state still plays an important coercive role in society.

beyond the game of institutions. Among all those examples, the feminist movement, from which I will speak in chapter IV, has increased its influence and knitted transversal alliances not only locally but also across the globe as the 8 of March strike proves. Therefore, despite government, institutional or marketing appropriations, movements are fluid and (re)territorialise in never-ending new assemblages. The question is how do these events embrace the transformational experience of these encounters? And, how could social movement theories say something about these metamorphoses without falling into the results-led trap? How can theory explain the fluidity of this new protagonism?

I will attempt to answer these questions along this dissertation by appealing to a shift in peoples' view of participation dynamics. In order to exemplify this shift in this chapter, I contextualise here two examples of how social actions contribute to social transformation independently of the outcome, goal or achievements interpretation that academics want to give to it. These are the cases of the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2011 and this research case study, the autonomous space of Can Batlló within the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuic in Barcelona. Both are very different and yet their participatory dynamics, actors and re-invention of the space have produced great impact within their social and political context, thus challenging majoritarian social movements' analysis.

### **Re-thinking participation, the 15-M movement case**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2011, people across Spain protested against the consequences of the crisis but also the generalised state of corruption, the electoral system, etc. The protest was organised by Democracia Real Ya (DRY) (Real Democracy Now) but soon became clear that nobody and everybody was under this name. DRY was founded in March 2011 and served as an umbrella organisation for at least two hundred other collectives (Democracia Real Ya, n.d.). Initially, this was a group of computer activist that started to be known in the wake of the protests against the Ley Sinde. This gave birth to the collective ¡No Les Votes! (Do Not Vote Them). Other participating groups were V (Vivienda) (Home), which started around 2005. Related to this last group was the Hipotecados (Mortgaged) which began in Barcelona. Other collectives participating in the movement include those coming from a left activist tradition, such as autonomous movements, Juventudes sin Futuro (Young People Without Future), and those with no activism experience, unemployed, small

entrepreneurs, professionals, senior citizens, immigrants, volunteers, etc. After the demonstrations, a few people decided to remain encamped in the city's main square, Plaza del Sol in Madrid and Plaça Catalunya in Barcelona. Soon they became thousands.

Although many of them had some activist experience, most of the participants did so following their own will, not as members of any particular group. In that sense, at least during the first periods of the encampment, there was a general agreement on rejecting any hegemonic form, ideology or structure. That means they did not participate as members of a particular group. None political group or representative was allowed to participate as such. No one represented others. There were no leaders, something which drove the media crazy. The 15-M, at least the beginning, took ownership of their broadcasting hence reappropriating technological tools and communications. This is what Castells has named postmedia movement (Castells, 2012 p. 120). From the beginning until the end of the encampments a general assembly decided whether to stay and when to go and how to organise. This assembly took place every day, and everybody could participate, everybody could disagree; the point was to keep the discussion going until a consensual agreement was reached.<sup>5</sup>

After a few days, in an assembly, a dynamisation manual was agreed. People organised themselves in commissions: food, cleaning, infrastructure, communications, technology, security/mediation, library, strategy commissions, etc. All these commissions were at the same time organised in assemblies where decisions were taken by consensus in spite of time limitations. In fact, the different encampments were virtually broadcasted in real time, meaning that people could follow the development of the assemblies online. There was no time constraints, everybody could talk, and the speakers changed every day. The assemblies had a simultaneous translation in sign language. This language was also the one used to express agreement, disagreement, and disagreement but with no-wish to block the decision. It was through this process that the claims of the movement were agreed. Within these claims, there were those with view on long term aims, such as the participants' disagreement with the Law D'Hont and their demand for a more proportional electoral system; or the petition for reforming the jurisdictional system. The claims that the 15-M consider urgent were those related to pushing for a modification of the law regarding housing evictions; the

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<sup>5</sup> If none agreement was reached, the assembly will continue with the discussion the next day.

reform of the financial system, such as increasing the tax for richest rents, application the Tobin Fee, etc.; and those claims related to education, health systems and labour laws.

It was clear that there were people that belonged to groups with assembly experience, but they maintained an open and inclusive dynamic which facilitated the participation of those with no experience. They also produced a dynamization manual to be used as a guide for future assemblies in which they encouraged contributions. The assemblies aimed to go beyond the traditional protests that denounce the government and to instead propose alternatives through transformation of the communication language and the construction of collective thinking.

Towards the end of the encampments, the general assembly and the working commissions reorganised themselves in the *Barrios* (neighbourhoods). The same practices that were developed in the encampment were transferred to the *Barrios*. This implies that the participatory languages and dynamics were now publicly visualised not only through the media but also by the general public; the political debate was taking place on peoples' front doorsteps. The *Barrios* assemblies took place in the streets, squares and community centres, recovering thus public spaces. The demands of those were re-shaped multiple times, acquiring different nuances in the *Barrios* where they were being put in place in keeping with the specific requests of each context. The concepts of participatory democracy, proportional representation and solidarity practices were debated publicly.

Occupations of streets, territories, factories, marches, creations of commissions, assemblies and a general sense of autonomy and self-management are usually among the most recognisable practices and decision-making methods accompanying the mobilisations mentioned here. These methods based on organising political and social participation are not new since they were greatly influenced by other actions and movements such as the Latin American movements during the 1990s or even before if one has into account how indigenous epistemologies organise. Although, they can also be traced back to the principles of the autonomist's movements developed during the 1970s and 1980s in many European countries such as Italy, Germany and, to a lesser extent,

France, to give some examples (Schifres, 2015).<sup>6</sup> However, as I will also explain in further chapters while referring to CB, there is a whole context preceding these decisions which perhaps have more significant influence.

Similarly, leaving some theoretical differences aside, such autonomous zones as the ones exposed in these sections have many relations with what Hakim Bey (in Day, 2005, p. 163) calls TAZ (Temporary Autonomous Zone). Bey, refers to TAZ as nomadic, invisible and non-revolutionary driven encampments because, according to him, revolution already happened, even if it was during a brief period (Ibid). However, he was not the first one to apply the idea of the encampments. A movable and constantly remodelled area was already developed by the Situationist International, which probably was better known through the work of Constant Nieuwenhuis of New Babylon (Sadler, 1999). The model advocated by Nieuwenhuis consisted in the creation of a ludic society where movement becomes unpredictable and joyful; prompting the society to change the way life is perceived out of the thought-homogenisation of the consumer society.

In that sense, the 15-M mobilisations, the Occupied movement, Tahrir Square as well as the occupation of territories in Brazil and Chiapas and the self-management of factories in Argentina, became examples of autonomous zones where politics were re-written and humanised. In the Spanish State, the 15-M, once back in the barrios has been reinvented (and reinforced) in multiple movements that enabled the collective thinking of desire and (re)composition. Thus, the 15-M reterritorialised a multiplicity of subjectivities into a determined space and time, into a situation, just only to be de-territorialised back to the barrios and again into other collectives, ideas and experiences. To give an example, someone who was an anarchist activist in Barri de Sants (one of the neighbourhoods in Barcelona) and belonged to the Ateneu Llibertari Sants (traditional anarchist reunion space present in most of the Catalan Countries) may have taken part in the 15-M. Later on, s/he might have participated in the 15-M assemblies in his/her neighbourhood of Sants or even, in the general neighbourhood assembly (ABS, Asamblea del Barri de Sants) where all the collectives get together to harmonise the actions affecting the community. At the same time, it is probable that this individual also participates in any of the other

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<sup>6</sup> There is much discussion about when the autonomous movement started and ended, depending on the country, authors and features of the movement one focuses on.

multiple community projects that take place in Can Batlló (nineteenth century industrial complex that was first occupied, and later conceded by the City Council and is now managed by the neighbours), which I explain later in this section.

Several points need to be mentioned at this stage of the analysis. In contrast to utilitarian theories that conceptualise crises as an opportunity for social movements to claim their piece of the political cake, the 15-M may be seen as an experience, a crack in the wall of the capitalist system (Holloway, 2010), something that remains in people's imagination. The 15-M is fuelled by peoples' desires to construct new spaces and transforming the old ones. For the first time in many years, assemblies were held public on the street. Puerta del Sol and Plaça Catalunya, as well as other squares in many cities, became not only physical spaces but also temporary and virtual ones, which have been deterritorialised in the squares, in the barrios, in platforms, in learning spaces at the neighbourhood associations and other collectives. The 15-M changed and became something else. It is true that there has been certain disenchantment with the movement, but this is more due to the simple fact that the media presented the 15-M movement as the representative of citizens' resistance. That forced the core of the movement, which was composed by people whose activism was there before and beyond "the movement", to reject the movement as a representation and to territorialise in other collectives and activists' actions.

Indeed, the 15-M however, has built the structures and has opened the space for non-experienced activists to pursue their own participation. Some Spanish authors, such as Carlos Taibo (2011), mentioned the fear that the movement was going to split and disappear between two types of participants: those that participated because of their personal circumstances, motivated by very concrete objectives, and, those whose participation was directed toward structural changes. In a similar fashion, some activists manifested their scepticism regarding the movement's continuation. Castells, for example, mentions a survey conducted by Simple Lógica in June 2011 (Castells, 2012 p. 119), where although 73% of the interviewees approved of the protest, only 53% thought it would help to improve the situation.

I argue, however, that these views follow a traditional idea of social movement as homogeneous and organised in a top-down manner. The capacity to break and participate in other assemblies or movements or platforms is part of the rhizomatic behaviours of nomadic movements. The free 'wandering' from a

social space to another following different needs and affinities instead of strategically prioritising, is to accept transformation from diversity to multiplicity. Thus, although I do not completely disagree with these analyses, I do not support the negative connotation of these perspectives. On a short article regarding the invisibility of the 15-M conquests, Fernandez\_Savater argues:

“eyes see what they are used to seeing: the event, not the process, identity, not metamorphosis, the spectacular, not the everyday, macro, not micro, quantity versus quality, results, rather than effects. The clinical view, the outside view, the paternal view; and the biggest problem is that we internalise these views and conform to their standards.” (Fernandez-Savater, Eldiario.es 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2013)

In fact, people have reorganised in other collectives and movements as I explain below. Some have taken a more institutional root in constituting political parties such as *Podemos* and others have dispersed within other collectives or created new ones or remained disenchanted sitting in their couch but for sure with a different perception Spanish political sphere. In spite of it, this dissertation is interested in those movements beyond the event, their metamorphoses because as Carlos Taibo argues, “Nothing will be like before” (Taibo, 2011).

### **Transmutation of values: everyday protests**

As mentioned before, the 15-M evolved from previous mobilisations. In turn, the 15-M metamorphosed into other forms of struggles. In this section, I discuss more specific examples of how people perceive these shifts. Indeed, these changes were firstly reflected on individuals participating in the protests during and after the 15-M. Independently of their previous mobilisation experiences, individuals from different social background and age came together to demonstrations, flash-mobs, occupations of public and private institutions, boycotts, etc. A glance at any newspapers in Spain from those years is sufficient to be confronted with cynical corruption, frauds committed by the banks, capital moves, jobs, poverty, police force's aggressions, suicides and a general system of structural violence. However, in the newspapers there were also mentioned coloured waves of everyday forms of protest: white (health), green (education), black (public officials), orange (social services and their clients), and purple

(women associations).<sup>7</sup> But also, miners, fireman, students and their parents, feminist groups, the list is endless. Between January and September 2012 only, more than 2,732 demonstrations took place in Madrid, 97,97% more than in 2011 (Público on 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2012).

Movements that reflect this transformation enabled by the experience of the 15-M have been, for example, the *iaioflautas* (*iaio* or *iaia* refers to grandad or grandma in Catalan) and the PAH. The first one is a collective of senior citizens that formed in opposition to the derogatory stereotypes that the right-wing media used to refer to the 15-M. These derogatory stereotypes consisted in relating the movement to the negative significance of those young people with anarcho-punk influences, the *perroflautas* (compose by the words of dogs and flutes), which translates to the English word “crusty”. This collective re-signified the term and used it humorously, concerning themselves and their age. It was created in Barcelona and spread rapidly around the state gathering senior citizens whose political views identified with those of the 15-M encampments. It demonstrated that these protests were not only a young-people fight but also represented their new-old struggles. In order to organise their performances, the *iaioflautas* make use of old, and modern social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, production of memes, etc. Moreover, they also organise acts and events that are no different from those organised by other collectives (e.g., occupying buses, banks, shopping-centres, supporting anti-eviction protests, etc.). The members of this group do not have specific objectives but multiple ones, nor have they any opportunity-led strategy. Rather, they are everywhere, and even if only a few, they are gradually constructing their everyday life and changing people’s views on the protests.

The second of these experiences is the one of PAH (Plataforma d’ Afectats per la Hipoteca; Platform of People Affected by Mortgage issues). This collective started from several initiatives such as *V of Vivienda*, which was constituted in 2006. It aimed to denounce the corruption in urban planning in the Spanish State and how this was affecting peoples’ degree of debts. PAH (PAH, n.d.) emerged in 2009 in Barcelona. However, as recognised by their own constituency, they started to obtain more tangible results after the 15-M. The platform, like other grassroots collectives, is organised horizontally in assemblies (weekly meetings) which gather individuals experiencing problems with their mortgage. During these

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<sup>7</sup> Protesters wear colourful t-shirts according to which protest they feel belonging to.



assemblies, people may get support about their situation and decide collectively how they are going to confront their issues. Starting from their personal drama, they decide on how to act, how to live, recovering their own autonomy, confidence and building a support network, hence introducing not only a personal change but a collective change in people's consciousness. Between the 2008 and 2012, 362,776 evictions were ordered and 577 stopped. PAH continue mobilising to this day, and their pressure has contributed to structural changes such as the approval of a Royal decree-law in 2012 (modified and expanded in March 2017, B.O.E.). Moreover, several other initiatives organised by the PAH were aimed at finding alternative homes for people, offering structural solutions to the problem, engaging with local institutions and publicly shaming of institutions representatives considered responsible for the problem. This is known as *escraches* and is one of the methods (and words) that Spanish mobilisations have directly inherited from the mobilisations in Argentina.

Additionally, one could talk of more structural changes that have derived from the 15-M mobilisations, such as the founding of several political parties, such as Podemos or Guanyem. Both derived very much from the need to articulate the claims made by the movement into a more institutionalised form. The first has been constituted on a state level and has in many ways devolved into a traditional party dominated by strong leadership, relatively strong party discipline and internal disputes for that leadership. Guanyem, now within Barcelona en Comú (Barcelona in Common), on the other hand, is led by the previous member and most well-known founder from la PAH, Ada Colau. On the contrary to Podemos, this party define themselves as a municipalist party whose coalition won the municipal elections in June 2015. In any case, I do not pretend to provide an exhaustive explanation about the party system of the Spanish state; it suffices to say that the 15-M took several directions, the one that remained committed to mobilisations, actions and activism on the ground with which this dissertation is interested; those who decided to institutionalise, creating political parties which at the same time have highly influenced the Spanish party system, and those whose participation has been blurred along the time. It is in this sense that we can speak of the multiples territorialisations and deterritorialisations of the 15-M where it metamorphoses and becomes something else.

*Can Batlló és pel Barri (Can Batlló belongs to the neighbourhood)*<sup>8</sup>

It seems to me that starting this research with the presentation of the 15-M movement should help the reader to situate within the current social movement context. From the namely Arab Spring during 2010 to the 15-M, occupied movement, etc. seems to be a clear cutting-point between prior social movements' analyses and the need for acknowledging other epistemological approaches. I have presented how current movements reach a global sphere providing mobilisations with technologies of resistances and strategies upon which create and resignify resistances. However, I argue resistance is embedded in everyday life; hence, those movements are only the visible face of social change while deeper transformations occur within the impasse in-between situations/actions. The voids of the Harlequin's jacket mentioned by Deleuze, occasionally, conceal processes and practices which go beyond the immediacy and attention of the events massively reported in the media. Likewise, their work, far from the public eye, allows for a longer term and stable transformations. This is the case of the political actions and resistance of Sants-Montjuïc district in Barcelona which, as I will expand Chapter VII and VIII, drawn on his local socio-political history in the physical and the symbolic sense of it.

Can Batlló is an industrial compound from the XIX century which was occupied by the neighbours of Sants and La Bordeta on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 under the claim "Can Batlló belongs to the community." Although this took place during the immediate aftermath of the 15-M, the occupation of CB was carefully organised and announced since 2009. A very heterogenic group of people of all ages and ideologies engaged in this process, children with their parents and grandparents, to middle age people coming from syndicalist movements, from well-established neighbours' associations to people from squat movements and other political and cultural collectives in the neighbourhood. The picture below represents the spirit heterogeneity and the festive character of CB's occupation.

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<sup>8</sup> Neighbourhood have here a sense community.



*Figure 1. Arrival to CB on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011(CB, 2011)*

The aim was/is to recover for public use a space of 9 hectares in the middle of the neighbourhood of La Borderta that had been neglected by the institutions and its private owners. Tired of negotiating with the institutions, the neighbours took matters into their hands and decided to organise and manage the space into different commissions and where decisions are taken by consensus in a general assembly. Currently, there are a total of 32 projects and commissions, which I joined as a research participant in 2013.

As I will explain in further chapters, although it is highly organised, their non-hierarchical decision-making process, the nature, and composition of their projects and commissions, their multiplicity of experiences and collectives as well as their political and historical backgrounds make CB an excellent example to reflect upon the theoretical problematic discussed in this chapter. Thus, CB presents a challenge for social (movement) analyses in the sense that the event of the occupation did not only created a situation of cut with the previous moment but how it has been embedded into people's everyday life. CB shares many of the methods used by other mobilisations mentioned here. However, it is important to highlight that its struggle goes back to the 1970s and is nurtured very closely by the local history. CB is a collective which success has been gestated with, through and in-between the shadows of other mobilisations. We cannot forget the strong libertarian tradition of Barcelona which still have very present the collectivisations and self-management of fabrics (being CB one of them) and public resources that took place during the anarcho-syndicalism (CNT-FAI) government of the city between July 1936 and August 1937(Bookchin, 2015 p.

118 - 119). In no few occasions, this period has been compared to the “Paris Commune”. It is for these reasons that, despite the influences from other social movements, Barcelona and, in this case, CB are justified to be analysed in their own right.

Nevertheless, the examples mentioned above, together with CB correspond to what Colectivo Situaciones has denominated new social protagonism referring to different nuances, beyond age, social class and ideology. I have preferred to look at differences among subjectivities, analytical alienations and impasses as positive potentiality for the creation of alternatives. I claim, these platforms and initiatives cannot be explained through rational-functionalist theories because, as the “new protagonism” explained by Colectivo Situaciones, they “seek neither homogeneity nor models, it only raises questions. It exists as a counter-offensive expressed in struggles that are multiple and in forceful dilemmas” (Colectivo Situaciones, 2002, p. 27). These initiatives favour the construction of (an)other discourse/narratives of what is necessary, of what is different and open possibilities that re-take spaces and construct another type of common sense. Following up on the idea of becoming minor, or as Deleuze says, one has to become woman, not in the sexual sense but as a way of detaching ourselves of the majority and metamorphose in positive difference and thus, transmute. There are thousands of groups and initiatives which any theory could contain unless it understands society via its minorities and affinities and through its processes of disembodiment and embodiments. Moreover, in that sense, social theory is “to tie ethics of knowledge to the concrete forms of existence” (Ibid, p. 25).

Thus, I focus on those aspects and practices of social movements which embody this perspective proving that social movements are not a deviance of normality, but a summation of assemblages constituted by multiple moments. I have here presented an overview of the theoretical framework that justifies this research under the light of a more obvious analysis such as the 15-M. However, this research goes in depth into those movements, collectives and actions which precede but also followed the 15-M. Even if they have seen themselves reinforced by it, their complexity goes beyond its influence. That is the case of Can Batlló in the district of Sants-Montjuïc in Barcelona.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented my research question and have tried to open a debate about the role of social theorists within society. In doing so, I have briefly presented how social theory has approached the study of social phenomena. Moreover, I have also emphasised how the political and economic system's failures have left the door open for people's enlightenment and engagement, in line with Foucault's discussion. Thus, creating passages that allow lines of flight; from diversity to multiplicity, from becoming majority to becoming woman, becoming child, becoming molecular, transforming the social body from the inside to the exterior.

"The fundamental power struggle", writes Castells, "is the battle for the construction of meaning in the minds of the people" (Castells, 2012, p. 5). To this I would add, in response to the question posed during the afore-mentioned presentation, can we measure this transmutation in people's minds? And if we do, are we not obliged to territorialise, to categorise, to homogenise back these changes and thus to miss the resistance that goes beyond rational objectification? Society does not plan and categorise, society acts while theory and policy-making forms run behind. In opposition to the need of rationalisation, the social theorist has to become closer to what Deleuze calls the smith, a nomadic traveller who "experiences an irrational becoming-object, through jarring encounters with the social-political real-with modes of social existence which cannot, must not, signify" (Day, 2005, p. 175).

I am not trying here to deny or underestimate the benefit stemming from rationalist analyses but to call for a dialogue between these theories and, the approaches of militant researchers and activist practices. In other words, I believe that social research would benefit from co-producing knowledge with social actors and 'minor literature(s)'. In this sense, I argue that to take seriously this co-production of knowledge would push social theory to the plane of consistency and thus initiate a process of deterritorialisation necessary to understand the nomadic dynamics of current social actions and movements. Nevertheless, this must be initiated by re-thinking social (movement) theory also from the feminist perspective which has been deliberately alienated as it were a different category of the social phenomena.

I have tried to illustrate this by presenting current debates in social theory through problematizing majoritarian approaches to the study of social

phenomena. Militant approaches, such as those from Holloway and Colectivo Situaciones, present crack, relays, and situations of social protests as a possibility for inaugurating and creating new meanings. This new protagonism and rhizomatic movements have the potential for transforming people's thinking. At the same time, this conceptual framework engages with the participation dynamics developed during the 15-M and influences other collectives such as the one this research is concerned with, Can Batlló. The examples explained above construct their own autonomy and networks working from within, hence transforming and re-shaping people's subjectivities. Against the defeatist arguments that some productivity-led perspectives see in these movements, I have argued here that the true outcome is the one that takes place in people's minds (Castells, 2012, p. 142) or in what Foucault calls "the soul" (Foucault in Day, 2005, p. 135). Social (movements) theory should then decide whether it wants to accompany these transformations or, on the contrary, remain alienated within its own discussions.

### III. BEYOND DIFFERENCE AND IDENTITY IN SOCIAL (MOVEMENT) THEORY

“What, after all, are Ideas, with their constitutive multiplicity, if not these ants which enter and leave through the fracture in the I?” (Deleuze 2004, p. 347)

In the previous chapter, I argued that social theory analysis focuses mostly on constructing rational arguments based on structure, agency and instrumental patterns which do not provide a full account of current urban-resistance movements on the ground. Likewise, those theories are not able to explain the link between the ontologies and epistemologies of these movements. Consequently, according to my argument, it is not possible to fully comprehend these resistances unless we open the field of social theory to more fluid approaches although this may come at the risk of being pointed out as overstepping the boundaries of the scientific method. How then has it become possible that social theory analysis can only be recognised as looked through the lenses of certain scientific values, categories and quantitative judgements? In an attempt to answer this question – and, since the criticism to social theory represents a crucial part of my argument in this dissertation – it seems appropriate to dedicate this chapter to explain what I consider to be the origins of my disagreement with majoritarian social theories and its responses. This requires an exploration of the morphogenesis (Delanda, 2005) of the ontological debates in social sciences. He argues: “Only *haecceities* (individual singularities) operating at different spatiotemporal scales should be legitimate entities in this ontology” (Delanda, 2013 p. 167). Understanding social movements as a BwO composed by rhizomatic assemblages and lines of flights as it has been presented in the previous chapter requires to re-thinking the ontological positions in which scientific knowledge is founded. In order to do so, I draw once again from authors, such as Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari and others whose work is highly influenced by the debate underpinning this controversy.

My main argument supporting the critique of traditional social theory is based on the idea that difference has been subordinated to identity. That is to say; there is a necessity to construct rational explanations grounded on repetitive patterns and categories focused on a transcendental given of the world which is represented, consciously or not, by a thinking (legitimised) subject (in this case

the researcher). This procedure blinds the possibility for difference to be presented in itself relying on its own immanent arrangement. Current (urban) social movements (or resistance movements as I will be calling it during this chapter and from now on) do not wait for someone to analyse or categorise them according to one particular ideology, social class, or any other identity or structure imposed from the outside. They define and relate themselves in a more or less rhizomatic chain of networks and relationships; they produce their own knowledge according to their own practices. Moreover, there is not a clear division between their practices, theories, and ideas but a way of acting based on a self-organising philosophy and a common rejection of the current capitalist society as well as the will to live more inclusively according to their differences. It is for this reason that social theory needs be rethought by opening to new forms of thinking beyond the idea of constructing identities.

In order to express this, the current chapter is divided into two main sections which progressively unravel the philosophy supporting the ontological development of social movements' analyses. In the first place, I go back to Foucault's work regarding the formation of western sciences which he explores in his book, *The Order of Things* (2002). The second section is characterised by Deleuze's work regarding the creation of concepts based on the discrimination of difference as a negative aspect of the concept in favour of constructing identities. Like Foucault, this author refuses representationalism; however, he resignifies difference by providing a positive interpretation.

In conclusion, in this chapter I briefly reflect on the philosophical approaches that ground this dissertation in order to provide philosophical background supporting a case study which develops far from the conventionalities of majoritarian approaches. The analysis of current resistance movements and their technologies requires not only being open to non-traditional perspectives but also being critical of most conventional approaches in order to comprehend the reason of why it would not be possible to accomplish the same understanding of these movements otherwise. Thus, the aim of this chapter is less about changing minds (of the subject I, as Deleuze puts it) and more about piercing or cracking those walls of the mind (I) that in social theory seem unmovable. Such an aim will be accomplished then if we are capable of opening the debate for different possibilities of analyses. Nevertheless, it is important to note that this argument will be completed with the next chapter, which presents



this other way of rethinking theory where ontology and epistemology speak to each other embodied by feminist theories.

### **The ontological formations of western science.**

The legitimation of western scientific knowledge and, in particular, social theory has been discussed on many occasions as presented in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, those arguments which dare to challenge this legitimisation keep on being belittled and dismissed as non-scientific, non-rigorous, complex, contradictories, abstract, etc. Majoritarian approaches rarely take the time to refute them in an honest and deep manner but use them as an excuse to exalt their own arguments, so turning social theory discussions into a schoolyard in which, the final argument is settled as “I am better”. The subject/object of study is set far from what is experienced on the ground. To this respect, Martínez, Casado and Ibarra in their work, *Social Movements and Emancipatory Processes* claim:

“technical-scientific knowledge, covered with the appearance of unquestionable objectivity given by numbers, graphs, indicators and the inaccessible jargon of each discipline, is presented to us as if it had nothing to do with the values, ideas and work-approaches of the people who produced it.” (Martínez et al., 2012 p. 20)

This is to say, the legitimation of scientific knowledge as objective, neutral and expert is an agent of power, generally in the hands of accommodated classes, mostly masculine and occidental. In this sense, it denies “the legitimacy to other knowledges and work-approaches closing the possibility for more plural participation in the debates and diagnoses of reality and feeds a supposedly technocratic and expert type of management that reinforces concentrations of power and not its democratisation”. (Ibid) Thus, as argued here many times, I attempt to open a dialogue between those knowledges and practices on the ground and academia. However, this aim obliges for “a more substantial discussion on the foundations of knowledge claims which inevitably requires reflections on the ontologies and epistemologies of all parties” (Chesters, 2012 p.153). In so doing, I go back to the question of ontology in order to comprehend its legitimation process and also to highlight its fissures and so open the possibility of this debate once again.

Foucault sets back the question of the ontological debate, to the analysis

of representation and how its initial role (theoretical project) has been “distorted and marked by the use of categories and patterns that are our own” (Foucault, 2002 p. 79). Representation has been removed from its classical use of articulating, providing a bridge between thought and language and arrives to our days as a mere representation of signs. Thus, he continues the work that had been initiated by Heidegger (Heidegger 2000; 1996) regarding the representation of thought. Both authors emphasise how a priori conditions of space and time affect thought’s perception of the world (as per Heidegger) and the various ways in which thought represents what is known (Colebrook, 2005, p. 169), according to Foucault’s views. Therefore, Foucault’s genealogy of representation provides a critique of transcendental ontologies which still seems to dominate current social movement theories.

For Foucault, the key to the above-mentioned ontology formation lies in the gradual dispersion and splits that knowledge suffers from its object/subject, from representation in itself. This means the progressive dismembering of the represented things in favour of the possibility of its analyses and the consequent dissociation of its previous relations. Ontology, in this case, is the result of these dispersions which are now taken for granted. In his work *The Order of Things* (2002), Foucault traces back to the seventeenth century (although the process was initiated in the sixteenth century) the splitting process to which things have been subjected. He carefully unravels the changes that have once affected the analysis of things and suggests (at least) two main epistemological moments to have in consideration. The first one marks the entry to classical thought, and it is characterised by the introduction of order in the analyses of things. From this moment on, things will be classified (divided) according to their identities and differences. Language, which used to refer to the things by the means of signs and similitudes, has to report back to this order. Foucault eloquently summarises this idea with regards to representation in a short paragraph on Don Quixote’s story:

“Don Quixote is the first modern work of literature, because in it we see cruel reason of identities and differences make endless sport of sign and similitudes; because in it language breaks off its old kinship with things and enters into that lonely sovereignty from which it will reappear, in its separated state, only as literature; because it marks the point where resemblance enters an age which is, from the point of view of

resemblance, one of madness and imagination.” (Foucault, 2002, p. 54)

According to Foucault, since resemblance is composed by signatures – similarity being the relation between signatures – knowledge consisted in deciphering these signs (ibid).<sup>9</sup> The madman “the disordered player of the Same and the Other” and the poet who “brings similitude to the signs that speak it” are now only reminiscences of resemblance. They are situated at the margins of the “field of knowledge”; “what has become important is no longer resemblances but identities and differences” which put order to the representations of thoughts (Ibid, 2002 p. 55). That is, sign and similitude can only be understood in terms of its classification either as ‘mad’ or as ‘poet’. Language has been removed from its event (action) and is to be understood as a mere medium of thought. In this case, truth no longer relies on the strength (force) of words but instead on the representation of language in relation to its position of order (Colebrook, 2005 p. 163). Only madness or imagination will rescue the missing being of language.

Finally, Cartesian thought marks the point of no return and excludes resemblance as the “primary form of I”. Descartes links the act of thinking to that of the thinking subject and existing. In this sense, to think passes to be a static substance included in the being subject and, thus, language being the medium to represent thought. By the means of comparison, things are examined in terms of measurement and size according to their smallest differences and identities and, in terms of their relational position to an external object. Thus, in the classical age knowledge is constituted by the empirical ordering of signs which accomplish a double function, being an “analytical tool” as well as “the empirical and murmuring resemblance of things”. This last refers to the dynamism of those things which escape representation because cannot be ordered and which Foucault sees implicit in imagination (Foucault, 2002 p. 64).

The new episteme is understood as the initiation of western scientific thinking, the birth of rationalism. Hence, the “first” scientific method consisted in substituting things by a progressive hierarchy of analogies organised in series from the simplest and smallest classification to more complex ones. Comparison

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<sup>9</sup> Foucault takes the figure of signature from XVI century botanic which state that plants reflect parts of the body. He states that knowledge was constructed the by deciphering what this signatures refer to while, resemblance was the invisible form that by embracing them makes their recognition possible. Resemblance is, according to Foucault, the result of a concatenation of *convenientia*, *aemulation*, *analogy*, and *sympathy* (Foucault 2002 p. 28 – 33).

enables the finding of discriminatory patterns of the Same, identities, or the Other, differences. Later on, the codification in series of representations will permit the systematisation of the analyses where mathesis and signs would be, for the moment, simply analytical tools.

We arrive then to the other epistemological divide Foucault considers fundamental when drawing the “archaeological network” of laws that affect thought. This moment determines the disruption of previous “kinships” with knowledge. In the classical age, he argues, the formation of knowledge was founded in its relation to order linked to mathesis, the representation of simple things by the means of algebraic forms, and taxinomia, the systems of signs which order complex representations. At the other extreme, it sets out genesis which pre-exists the empirical series and reconnects resemblances to things by the means of imagination. While mathesis concerns designations and judgements, taxinomia belongs to the order of signs; this is the classification of things according to its differences and identities which genesis equips with the continuity of time. Taxinomia coexisted between these two edges: on the one hand, it acted as an ontology of judgements and provided meaning to the confused existence of things in imagination, a “philosophy of representation” (Ibid, 2002 p. 82) until the birth of Kantian Critique.

This new episteme reunites ontology and mathesis while leaving the semiologic function of taxinomia, the interpretation of things as part of a different discipline. The science of truth can then only be represented by the previous, the so-called “formal disciplines” under the patronage of mathesis, which Leibniz put the centre as the universal language that should be the medium for the production of scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, this does not only imply the law of algebra but the construction of a hierarchical system which determines a structure of relations between the signs. This structure or model of thought, as Deleuze will later call it, translates in the mathematisation of language itself. The separation of thought and language is then definitive. Language is not analysed, articulated or classified anymore for what it represents but for its grammatical construction, the mechanism of its discourse which determines all other relations.

Two main schools of thought, Ideology and Kantian critique, follow this argument, signalling the end of classical thought and the beginning of modern scientific analysis to our day. The former unfolds representation to its limits by deducting to the point of questioning the relation between representations

themselves, from their very being to the primary impression. Thus, ideology is the knowledge of knowledge. Despite situating its starting point outside of representation, Ideology tries to unravel the laws that connect representations and, in doing so, must reconstruct the narrative of representation. Therefore, Foucault refers to Ideology as “the last of the Classical philosophies” (Ibid, 2002 p. 264). The other, Kant’s critical approach, questions the limits of representation and the possibilities for the impression to be constituted as a universal form. Accordingly, any fundamental conditions of representation cannot be based on empirical observations or experiences. There must be a priori conditions that enable any representation of the world, time, space, concepts, categories, etc. Additionally, representation is understood as limited since it refers to what can be re-presented as something given from without. For Kant, a certain point of view of the world needs to be presupposed by a subject and he presupposes an underlying logic, an “absolute ground where things are given” (Colebrook, 2005 p. 28). In this sense, what can be known is also limited by the possibilities of experience and the re-presentation power of the subject. Therefore, knowledge must be situated somewhere without representation (Ibid, 2005 p.1). Kant’s Copernican turn consists then in establishing a separation between the autonomous power of the subject and the object. Kant puts reason’s way of seeing the world (Ibid, 2005 p.31) at the centre of his argument. In other words, thought is located within the a priori conditions/logic of representation thus turning towards itself, as something to be unveiled and re-presented (Ibid, 2005 p.171). Likewise, language, as previously mentioned, is only seen as a representation of thought, a ‘signifier’, forgetting its own capacity as an event subjected to man’s objectification logic (Ibid, 2005 p.172). The ground or *logos* is then located within man. That means, reason which in German (*Vernunft*) can also be translated as good sense, despite being affected by experience, is able to produce a priori (spontaneous) representations of the object. In that sense, Kant’s interest focuses on the universal character of the conditions affecting reason previous to experience.

Kant not only opens the door to the metaphysics of representation but also to those of “Will and Life” as well (Foucault, 2002 p. 264). This means, the foundation of transcendental subjectivity in relation to the subject and its object and the field of conditions that enable the object, sets transcendental philosophy as the study of the never-quite-representable objects. According to Kant, such is

the structure or logic of what can be known, that which relates the experience of phenomena to a posteriori imperfect mirage of the unreachable object and the a priori existence of the object. The first explains the justification of 'positivism' and 'empirical sciences', which "employs the deductive forms only in fragments and strictly localised regions" (Ibid, 2002 p. 267); while the second belongs to the field of pure 'formal sciences.'

Summarizing, by tracing the archaeology of representation and its relation to language and thought, Foucault shows how western ontological forms have been built upon the bases of non-linear splits, fragmentations and dispersions instead of the synthesis of the Same and the Other into more complex matter. The world of resemblances has disappeared or, at its best, has been forgotten by formal knowledge. The dissociation between mathesis and analysis of order can be found, even today, in the failed attempt of the epistemological field to unify both aspects. Any effort to purify empirical methods and provide philosophical foundations is based on mathematisation and hierarchisation which, tends to oversimplify in order to fit empirical objects into 'formal science'. The empirical world remains in an intellectual limbo waiting to be formalised in essential laws either by deducting all transcendental reflections or by discovering its formalities, hence turning the "empirical domain" towards itself. Truth, at that point, lies only within those a priori conditions that explain the objectified forms of knowledge isolated and sovereign from the empirical knowledge.

At the heart of modern episteme lies the will of relating knowledge to mathesis and analysis of the transcendental being by establishing universal patterns and identities, justified by a presupposed rationalistic ontology which resides outside the object/subject. Foucault's response is a strong anti-representationalism directed towards the unifying and normalising character of the western episteme. In opposition to that representationalism, Foucault argues, things do not have significance in themselves. Instead, they are represented through language; thus, thought is not a mere response to that need of representation but something dynamic, a positive event (Colebrook, 2005 p. 167). This means western ontology is founded on the autonomous capacity of human reason for making sense of the world while for Foucault it is based on the immanent interpretation of the world. In other words, the world does not exist anywhere in the outside and language is not the shadowy/mirror interpretation of some "true" external object that waits to be discovered by man. Signs do not

make sense of a pre-existing world, pre-represented object or transcendental presence but there are only discursive events that relate to other events (Colebrook, 2005 p. 173). Language is then event in itself.

On the field of social movements, one could think of the a priori conditions that draw people together. The indignation, outrage, temperament, youth, austerity, disenchantment with the political systems, has been some of the arguments given for the rise of the 15-mobilisations. We can all think of conceptual frameworks more or less informed as well as thinking of claims and outcomes influencing those terms and yet, something escapes these enumerations. How are the processes that related these concepts together constructed? What does enable cultural and subject transformations in those movements? The occupation of Can Batlló, for example, was very carefully organised, so much that the authorities were informed about it one year and a half prior to it. Nobody knew what was going to happen and whether it was going to work, there was no structural planning of the project beyond the occupation of the building, only trust in the shared experiences and relationships among those taking part. Looking at those events from the outside, trying to universalise what in reality are emotions, passions and desires are condemned, in no few occasions, to superficial misinterpretations. Likewise, the 15-M was not only fuelled by the mentioned concepts, but an accumulation of many other experiences and, I dare to say, by unresolved conflicts which post-Franco democracy has not solved. The capacities and practices implemented in CB's struggle could be framed within the tendencies of current urban movements such as the 15-M, Occupy movement, the Arab spring or even the epistemological lessons learned from alter-globalisation mobilisations as well as from Latin American movements. However, once in the ground one discovers that what it looked like a tendency, pattern or a trend is, in reality, the result of forty years of neighbourhood struggle and it goes beyond first look interpretations. Moreover, practices such as occupations, assemblies, commissions etc. go back not only to autonomous fights in the 1970s but also to the practices employed during the anarcho-sindicalist government of Barcelona between 1936- 1937 to which I will refer in further chapters.

On perhaps a different perspective, additional examples can be seen on the "sociology of the image" methodology developed by Bolivian author Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2015). She refers to two images (belonging to a chronical)

painted by the Inca Waman Puma (1535 – 1615), in Spanish Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala. One of the images represents Atawalpa Inka and the other Tupac Amaru I, both men are being decapitated. Historians have analysed the images and accused Waman Puma of a misleading interpretation of the events since only Tupac Amaru I was killed decapitated. However, because of their academicist view, they obviate what Waman Puma was representing. That is that decapitation was one of the highest offences in the indigenous culture and that his painting was the symbolic denounce of the ill-treatment and humiliations they suffered in the hands of the Spaniards. Thus, deliberately or not, historians have ignored the indigenous ontologies represented in these paintings. In the same way, the external position of reason and pursue for universalities imposed by western ontologies risks ignoring those who are protagonists of the event.

The 'Event' in Foucault is drawn from Deleuze's perspective, which he explores in his work 'Theatrum Philosophicum' (Foucault, 1995). The concept of event in both authors is developed with the intention of reversing the Platonic Series as the analyses of the copies and the shadows, the image and its reflections. In this sense, this dissertation will follow Foucault's and Deleuze's idea of the event as the contingent passage, a creation of sense in itself, that allows our analyses to go from embodied to disembodied understandings of the world alongside each other without the need of setting the one previous to the other or vice versa. Event underlies lines of flight, movement, nomadism and ever-changing practices and dynamics which I defend as a more appropriate analysis of current social movements. In this sense, event is equal to the idea of situation, which I have explained in the previous chapter II. That is, situation as a moment of determination, a problem distributed along multiple other moments or points which cannot be categorised (Foucault, 1995 p. 3).

As I will explain later, Can Batlló is in the same sense the result of these multiple assemblages of events. That is to say, the formations of different series to the representational/platonic ones make sense when looking at Deleuze unfolding sense of the event; as a passage to the material and, to the immaterial as a sign or symbol of this materiality. As Deleuze and Guattari themselves argue "The possible does not pre-exist, it is created by the event. It is a matter of life. The event creates a new existence, it produces a new subjectivity (new relations with the body, with time, sexuality, the immediate surroundings, with culture, work)." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2006 p. 233). This understanding of the event is



not only opposed to the a priori conditions introduced by Kantian theory but also to the mathematization of the event presented by Badiou. Equally, the argument for a metamorphosis of the subject in terms of relationships, culture, body, sexuality, etc goes back to the case regarding new protagonists exposed in chapter II as well as to the ontological examples presented above.

Let me highlight here that when using the idea of event in this dissertation, I exclusively refer to Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of event and not that of Badiou (Badiou 2007). I am very aware of the ontological difference between them which I have briefly mentioned in the previous chapter. Badiou's event refers to that what cuts the current mainstream situation or "indifferent multiplicities", in his negative expression as "other than" and from the outside, an undecidability that needs be named, conceptualised and defined mathematically (only then can be seen as positive). Event is that rupture with the situation (ibid) as something which is hidden or invisible, a non-situation waiting for an enlightened mind to categorise it (usually a western-white-male-academically-legitimised intellectual, preferably a trained professional philosopher). I doubt here the idea of the non-visible part of the situation perhaps would have been better to speak of deliberate exclusion or ignored or latent hence, it cannot be said that it is invisible and appears all of a sudden as, for example, some authors suppose the outbreak of current social movements, such as the 15-M, explained in previous chapter. In that sense, Badiou ignores the multiple formations of "invisible" situations that take place along mainstream situations, see, for example, the case of Can Batlló's over forty years struggle. The event, according to Badiou, only makes sense as a mathematical decision and, in that sense, it needs to be able to be explained through axiomatic sets. Foucault's reading here leaves clear that in order to adapt to the mathematics rigour, the mathematical construction of such an ontology based on axiomatic sets of theory is necessarily exclusive and reductive. Thus, Badiou's perspective on the event is already out of consideration since it already presupposes some a priori conditions in order to mathematise the event. For Deleuze, on the contrary, the event is not only a mathematical decision but also a problematic distribution, hence including that what precedes the axiom (Smith 2003). Thus, the event constitutes for Deleuze an ontological field in itself, while for Badiou only mathematics can express ontology; hence ontology is mathematics (Badiou 2007).

Badiou examples of event refer to big revolts, such as the Paris Commune,

Russian Revolution, the Maoist movements or May 1968 and so presuming a common determinate ideological position. I argue, those have certainly little to do with current movements, even if one thinks about the Zapatista Movement and alter-globalisation movements, or the Arab spring (if one wants to push so far) their preceding and post-contexts of multiple and heterogeneous complexities and resistances which, have little to do with the excluded or invisible/clandestine realities of the event in Badiou's sense, cannot be ignored. In fact, I am convinced Badiou's idea of event is easily refuted when looking at how current social movements perceive themselves (based on the premise that social movements do not need help from intellectuals to define themselves). On a more concrete example, as I have found out during my fieldwork, the idea of movement, creation of events (situations), transformation, desires and resignifications implicit in Deleuze's concept of event has been picked up by current urban movements and, more consciously, by transfeminisms resistances. See for example the resignification of terms such as queer, butch, or in other contexts "las kellys" (word initially used contemptuously for those women whose job is to clean houses, hotels...) or the word "iaioflautas" (composed by elderly and crusty) which senior citizen mobilisations have made their own, to name some.<sup>10</sup> However, antecedents, or sparks of these transformations, can also be found in first-nations cosmologies, Latin American movements or during the brief existence of Situationist International in Europe as I have referred to in previous chapter. Going back to Badiou's discussion, it would be very misleading and show no understanding of current social movements if one presupposes that an event is only acknowledged externally since when it is recognised as a true event, it is done by obviating that, in current mainstream telecommunications society, are also the dominating powers the ones that highlight one event in detriment of the other. Perhaps, this understanding of the event justifies (in order to avoid confusion) the need for me to search for other terms. Therefore, I will indistinctly speak of plateau, a term which I borrow from Chesters and Welsh (2006), instead of event, in order to make my point more comprehensive. Likewise, this argument supports also my decision, which I clarify below, to stop speaking about social

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<sup>10</sup> Las Kellys, together with the union of sex workers, are one the most recent symbols of the struggle for labour rights. They have managed to stick together and regulate conditions against the exploitation successfully while creating an association (October 2016) in a country where tourism and hence, the work produced by accommodations is one the essential services sustaining the economy. In so doing they have redignified their job in front of the Spanish society.

movements but resistances movements. In so doing, I substitute the over-used concept of social movement perceived as a static “thing” (Scholl, 2012) by resistance movements in the sense of Foucault.

### *Power and resistance in Foucault*

Bearing in mind the plane of immanence has been forgotten by western scientific thought, Foucault’s philosophical work reconsiders that which underlies the movement and remains implicit in the event/plateau between the being of things; that what escapes its ordering in differences and identities; what remains attached to resemblances; what is rescued by imagination, etc. In so doing, he re-theorises the concepts of power and resistance beyond its analysis within man’s domain. Power is not possessed by anybody, but it is understood as a circuit which transits through the subject (Foucault, 2003 p. 34). Power becomes the “multiplicity of force relations in the immanent sphere” (Foucault 1981, p. 92 - 93), either in their struggles, “the disjunctions and contradictions” between them or their manifestation in institutions. Likewise, according to Foucault, power micromechanics also depend on those of resistances, referred to as a multiplicity of knots, situations, focuses, fractures, etc. that cannot be reduced to relations of power. Thus, resistance exists within power relation, however, not as a mere reaction but as that what cannot be reduced to power and hence resistance is previous to power. Consequently, resistance disrupts power in a mobile non-linear way or as Foucault expresses it:

“Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localised in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities” (Foucault, 1981 p. 96).

Thus, according to Foucault, power is not so much related to the imposition of law but to “military or strategic model” (Caygill, 2013 p.8) and domination tactics (Foucault, 2003 p. 38; 2001). It is in this sense that Foucault has the purpose of reversing Clausewitz statement for which war is politics by other means by arguing that politics is war by other means (Caygill, 2013 p.9; Foucault, 2003 p. 47; Foucault, 2001). Accordingly, it is necessary to reverse this political model, which means redefining politics and posting the analysis of resistances as a strong candidate (Ibid). Following this argument, Caygill (2013) analyses the

mechanics of resistance situating current urban resistances (analysed in this dissertation) on the line of the International Situationist experience. This is as an “aesthetic resistance to everyday life in the name of transition from survival to life” (ibid p. 174) where art is understood broadly as politics of life. This dissertation follows then this idea of resistances as the creation of new political forms beyond the domination of power strategies. In so doing, resistance movements refer to those who escape power domination by creating a network of biopolitical resistances. CB with its 32 self-managed projects is, in a sense presented above, one of those movements in which practices present an alternative way of life. A place whose primary focus was to provide the neighbourhood with equipment and encounter spaces denied by the institutions for many years. Spaces not subjected to monetary exchange and where everyone is welcome to participate, some do it as users and others as militants. Moreover, CB has proved that it is possible to live beyond the clientelism of services, beyond leaderships and discussions, compromises and consensus can be motor of its complex management. Thus, CB does not think about opposing or resisting but creating and experimenting as well as negotiating an autonomous zone for everyday life.

In conclusion, traditional social theories echo and reproduce western ontological flaws and hinder the analysis of social complexities regardless of their attempt to fix them within static and totalizing theories. In that sense, some of the criticisms presented in chapter II coincide with the point made here as I have tried to explore the grounds for the ontological understanding of these criticisms. In doing so, I have recalled how ontological formations are closely linked to the evolution of the concept of representation based on the ordering of identities and differences. I do not pretend to cancel this point of view but to create awareness and invite us to reflect and question the foundations on which social analysis is based. Following Foucault's understanding, I am convinced that current social movements do not appear according to meaningful categories, identities or rationalistic patterns, but as multiple events/plateaus and actions in themselves with their own force and logic of existence which, if one wants, are perceived by the observer with certain regularity or habit. However, this is only apparent after the event/plateau or power which constitutes these movements or, as I will be calling them for the rest of this work, resistances movements. Likewise, the project of explaining representation beyond the subject point of view will also be analysed by Deleuze, (in a way that I will expand upon in the next section) by

examining the transcendental aspect of difference and identity. Therefore, the section below will explain the importance of unthinking difference and identity to comprehend the ontological perspective underpinning this dissertation.<sup>11</sup>

### **The unfolding of difference beyond identity**

Brian Massumi in his forewords to *A Thousand Plateaus* argues that the concept is “a brick. It can be used to build the court of reason. Or it can be thrown through the window”. The concept is a set of circumstances which he compares to a vector, and it has “no subject or object other than itself” (Massumi 2004 p. XIII). Referring to nomad thought he continues:

“Rather than analysing the world into discrete components, reducing their manyness to the One of identity, and ordering them by rank, it sums up a set of disparate circumstances in a shattering blow.”

This dissertation pretends to see resistance movements in the same way, as a set of circumstances where subject and object are undisguisable rather than attached to a fixed identity. For this reason, and once presented what has the construction of the pillars scientific thought above, this section will go back to unthink the micro-mechanisms through it is constructed. Thus, I look at concepts and the idea of identity influences the analysis of resistance movements. In presenting Deleuze in my argumentative line, I have two main purposes, if not more. On the one hand, his work of transcendental empiricism overcomes the problem of ontology, which relies on the interpretation of being as a substance at the essence of man’s thought which still underpins social analyses today. In this sense, Deleuze work seems to be the natural successor to Foucault’s efforts exposed above regarding his archaeological work on language and thought. On the other hand, he profoundly develops the idea of difference beyond identity, as I will explain further, and by so doing, provides social science an invitation to review the grounds in which its ontological understanding stands. Likewise, Deleuze concept of becoming allows us to link forgotten ontologies with epistemological approaches that have been undermined by western science. In this sense, I argue how Deleuze’s philosophy, among others, provides a theoretical position which enables me to problematise majoritarian social (movements’) analyses by presenting an ontological position that goes beyond man’s point of view. At the same time his idea of the Body Without Organs, as

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<sup>11</sup> However, Deleuze’s transcendental view is very different from that of Kantian approaches.

mentioned already in the previous chapter, meaning the multiplicity of networks with functions, processes, relations and intensities, etc., provides me with a theoretical parallel for explaining the technologies of resistance that are practised on the ground. In this section then, I expand on how the idea of difference freed from the concept of identity constitutes the motor of the multiplicity by the means of endless becoming. Difference posited as movement which flows through the pores of the (Social) Body without Organs and in this sense, becomes eternal simulacra in a Deleuzian interpretation of the concept.<sup>12</sup>

Deleuze, in apparent opposition to Foucault's immanence, and also shifting from Kant's transcendentalism, posits 'transcendental empiricism' as a positive affirmation. This is in a way his own interpretation of the project of immanence. He describes two understandings of the world: the one of representation and the one of simulacra. In this sense, he proposes to overcome 'platonic series,' not by reinstating representation to its original identity with the represented object, but by affirming the rights of Simulacra (Deleuze, 2003), expanding this beyond its own limits. Thus, being simulacra the repetition in extremis of re-presentation. However, it is necessary to notice here that Deleuze understands repetition as "difference without concept" (Deleuze, 2004 p. 27) which discloses in two forms; the external and static one, where difference lies between the concepts and the internal one, which "unfolds as movement". While the first refers to repetition of the Same and contains identity and generality, the second one comprises difference, the heterogeneity of the Other. Both forms of repetition cannot exist without the other; hence, when Deleuze affirms the rights of Simulacra he highlights that which is an excess of the Same, this is repetition of the Other. In other words, Deleuze explores that which is different in repetition, that what exceeds the re-representation of things as Foucault had named, that which is "a-presentation" and escapes the identity of the concept by unfolding as movement repeated eternally.

In so doing, Deleuze must free philosophy from the burden that supposes the ontological thinking since Descartes and Kant. He goes back to the Cartesian concept of thought understood as a substance previous to the empirical which needs to be represented by a subject. Thus, we encounter once again the concept of representation, which also Deleuze will reject. So, Deleuze, in a new

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<sup>12</sup> Simulacra is understood in its positive sense as the repetition of repetition which is repetition of difference itself.

diagnosis of modernity, goes back to the first epistemological moment referred to by Foucault. Deleuze's position redefines what had been Foucault's interpretation of representation of being since Descartes and, in so doing, overcomes the trap of the being's point of view in which philosophical analyses fall since.

Nonetheless, there have been a few authors that tried to overcome Descartes' subjectivation of thought and the dangers of anthropologism (Colebrook, 2005 p. 208). Kant's critique of Descartes already points out this issue; the subject cannot be a thing or a static substance waiting to represent other things but the prospect of thinking those things. This is the subject, according to Kant, are the conditions, the structure which represents being as a substance. Kant's transcendental logic, as has already been pointed out by Foucault, describes the conditions for which the world is given and, in so doing, puts the subject at the centre of this givenness (decision). Despite this argument, Kant still has been accused of being too anthropologicistic since neither logic nor representation can escape the effects of the point of view.

Other authors, such as Heidegger (1996) continue to develop Kant's critical line and suggest that any given logic or grounding must be preceded by a pre-subjective transcendence (Colebrook, 2005 p. 214). Hence this notion of the 'pre-' implies a certain movement and temporality, *Dasein* (to be there). Foucault, on the other hand, argues that this temporality is only one aspect of the ungrounding of this logic; the multiplicity of relations, differences and epistemological practices that forms the conditions of being. The point of view is affected by the events/plateaus and its different unfoldings. In this sense, it is the very act of thinking that constitutes our being and therefore that which needs to be questioned.

One can also mention the cases of authors such as Derrida (2001), Rorty (1982), Thrift (2008) and feminist theorists, such as Irigaray (1995), Braidotti (1991, 1993), Grosz (1994), etc., who have elaborated their arguments on the basis of an anti-representationalism perspective. Nevertheless, despite the efforts, many of the ontological approaches remain anchored on a pre-conceived thinking being. This is the case of, for example, Habermas (1985) presupposition of rationality; or, Melucci's (1989, 1996) subordination the subject differences to identity. Despite his efforts to elaborate on a fluid perception of the becoming subject its perspective of identity remains dominant (even if it is not viewed as a fixed idea) and prevails that of difference since the subjective recognition of this

identity is one of the key conditions in his theory of collective action. This implies that certain rational capacity and conceptualisation must pre-exist action/movement.

Deleuze criticism to Descartes and also Kant, aims likewise to free thought from the subject. To ground the indeterminate goes beyond providing a form since something from that what is indeterminate also raises the ground, hence maintaining a determinate formlessness which can only be intuited (Deleuze, 2004 p. 344). Thus, any image or model reflected in this new surface is condemned to be blurred. Thought as determinate ground needs, however, of the formlessness indeterminate that pushes it to ground it. It is in this sense that matter and the abstract line of form do not suffice in order to explain thought. What causes thought to think then? Deleuze argues that is that what occurs between Descartes's determinate "I think" and indeterminate "I am"; this is "the pure and empty form of time" (Ibid, 2004 p. 346). The subject then, in Descartes, retains only the possibility of thinking. It is in this sense that the form of time introduces the element of difference between the indeterminate and the determinate. Thus, it is the mechanism or flow between the determinate and the indeterminate which constitutes the theory of thought without image from which difference "is the opening between the two" (Colebrook, 2005 p. 203).

Only by liberating thought from the subject can difference be understood in its own right. For thought cannot be represented and exists as movement previous to the object and cannot be contained within the limits of the thinking subject. Thought lies on the pre-existing field of singularities which form the given and goes beyond the point of view of the subject (Colebrook, 2005 p. 206; Deleuze 1990). In this sense, this idea of no-presence or anti-representationalism goes beyond all ontologies based on the categorisation of being. Difference, which has been understood until now as a negative measurement tool that breaks the linearity of reason and only exists in order to highlight the goodness of identity, is, according to Deleuze, the witness of the fake equilibrium of representation. Thus, it is worth exploring what difference as "catastrophic" concept has to unravel regarding the construction of social sciences ontologies.

### *Difference beyond identity*

To develop a philosophy of difference, Deleuze's work analyses to what extent



difference overcomes re-presentation and frees itself from the tyranny of the identity (concept-to-be). His argument goes in-depth into the process of concept and thought-image formation. He focuses on the need for unknotting the essences of difference and repetition from that which is constraining them. Repetition, Deleuze argues, is difference without concept. Taking into account the two forms of repetition I mentioned above, one can say that repetition is composed at its heart by a static idea, which relates externally to the concept-to-be and it is explained by its identity. The other form of repetition is difference, explained by its internal relationships with the idea. However, repetition itself is neither exclusively external nor internal; there are repetitions which lie in between since the essence of repetition is not confronted with a concept so far. And yet, it is necessary to define what it is repetition which, “we will be wrong to reduce it to a difference which falls back into exteriority” only (Deleuze, 2004 p. 27- 28). Likewise, difference claims its own idea. For this reason, Deleuze argues that the encounter between these two lines cannot be assumed; therefore, the essence of repetition must lie in between their “interference and intersections” (Colebrook, 2005 p. 30- 31). In other words, prior to the formation of the concept only difference in itself can be sensed, which later on could be repeated, or not, within the concept. Thus, repetition can only be said of that what is the Same or the Other.

Difference is contained within everything and yet only regains its own idea (in the transcendental sense) as a negative concept, once it acts as the limit between identities. Despite this, it is the concept of difference as “catastrophe” that acknowledges, by its only existence, the unstable nature of representation, in the sense that it is not capable of providing an account of the idea of difference in itself, as I will clarify further. Difference as negation is then Deleuze’s point of the departure in order to explore the idea of difference per se. And in so doing he overturns its negative interpretation. Difference – he argues –, is a state which, stands out from the undetermined ground. Deleuze uses the expression “make the difference” (Deleuze, 2004 p. 36) in order to explain that “what flees” the Same. That what it flees the ground does not need of what stays because by fleeing it exists by itself, it rises from the ground and becomes a “different” autonomous determination. Previous to Deleuze’s analyses, the expression of making the difference could have been interpreted by the subject of being, which relays on reason or point of view. In other words, until this moment difference has

been the negative reflection of the “real” matter/ground and not a form of “unilateral distinction” (Deleuze, 2004 p. 36). That is due to reason which, according to Deleuze, mediates between difference in itself (idea of difference) and the representation of difference within the concept. In order to illustrate this point, Deleuze uses the example chiaroscuro technic in which the artist gives life to its painting by mastering the abstract lines that delimit light from shadows. On the ground there are only undetermined contrasts of lights and shadows, and it is reason only that determinates the form. However, the differences between the abstract forms already exist previous to their interpretation.

A similar view can be found in the first chapter of Foucault’s book, *The Order of Things*, where he extensively analyses Velazquez’s painting, *Las Meninas*. In this case, Foucault points out how the different focus of light travels through the whole represented image giving birth to the forms of diverse characters and, at the same time, causing confusion about where the main focus lies. In both cases the indeterminations of shadows and lights draw a new determinate form, that of the characters/scene or, as Deleuze says, a new ground which exists independently of the subject/ object interpretation. It is in this sense that he uses the expression “make the difference”. As I have explained in this chapter, it is reason (introduced by Descartes thinking being) what problematises the idea of re-presenting the ground/matter by imposing distribution upon it.

In a sense, if we translate this in terms of social resistance, it can be compared to autonomous movements around European cities. That is, those resistances that aim to regain the control of their lives in a political manner beyond the institutional control or the analyses of intellectual gurus. That is to say, those that have been excluded, those that are different, who do not count because cannot be fitted into rationalist ideas of what they are or what they are not, those who have not need of that analyses that try to conceptualise them, those, unground aprioristic concepts only by their doing. The squat movements would be the most typical example regarding autonomous differences here. Though, as I will analyse later, the idea of autonomy and self-management underlays and is spread among other groups, such as neo-Marxists, post-anarchist, ecologists, indigenous movements, feminists and transfeminism groups etc. and, even has linked alliances with less radical groups, such as other type of organisations as neighbourhood associations or aggregates of collectives, as I will present on the analyses of my case study of Can Batlló in Barcelona. Hence, from the point of

view of autonomous differences, these groups conform an an-organic body which stands out of and raises the ground per se, in Massumi's words "a set of circumstances" (Massumi, 2004 p. XIII). So, if we visualise resistance movements as per its differences or circumstances another picture unravels, that of Velazquez's lights and shadows and Caravaggio's chiaroscuro, a picture where lights and shadows cannot be understood without each other, and the limits between the object and the subject are blurred, meanwhile the spectator is the actor. By looking at CB beyond the occupation of a building within a time-frame, I discovered the richness of its collective memory. I learned that CB had always been a city within a city even while the factories were active. And that its practices were closer to its local history of cooperatives and anarchist management. That its people are not only CB but neighbours, local associations, squatters from Can Vies, liberal Christians from San Medir Church, as well as people who do not identify themselves as politicised. It is for this reason, because of its differences and timelessness and the processes that bring all of these together, for what CB should be analysed.

According to Deleuze (based on Foucault approach), there are four aspects of reason that constrain difference: identity, analogy, opposition and resemblance. In so far that difference is mediated by these four conditions one can speak of specific and general difference. The first one is related to identity since it only appears as a form of contrariety at its genus within the undetermined of the concept. Meanwhile, generic difference is related to analogy and, in this sense, puts in relation determinable concepts without being contradictory. The first one is too small in order to be the determination which forms the concept of difference and the second one is too large and almost escapes the idea of the concept. Opposition, on the other hand, only makes sense when relating determinations within concepts, whereas resemblance refers to the represented object (Ibid, 2004 p. 37). These four stages explain the process for which reason assigns a general concept its attributes. It is in this sense that difference remains just a "predicate in the comprehension of a concept". Therefore, difference it is then inscribed within representation and only exists in itself in the precise moment when breaking the linearity of analogy and resemblance.

Following the reasoning explained above and being difference a mere predicate that participates in the construction of the concept, one can only say that the equivocity of being will also be compromised by what seems to be a

distributive and hierarchical process of reason. Being does not possess the character of a genus in this sense, but it is more related to analogy. Deleuze argues that is judgement which is capable of reinstating being to the terms of the concept since judgment retains in its essence the conditions of partition (distribution) and measurement (hierarchy) (Ibid, 2004 p. 42). The first function is attributed to common sense while the second is to good sense. Subsequently, it is justice as a condition of measuring what fits common and good sense into categories of the concepts. So then, Deleuze argues, “every philosophy of categories (specific difference) takes judgement for its model” (ibid). Equally, judgement relays on a subjective being in order to categorise the conceptual world.

Subsequently, philosophy has been traditionally constructed on a presupposed image of thought. Philosophy based on conceptual thinking presupposes an implicit capacity for attributing to a particular image of thought the elements of good sense within the subject and common sense in relation to the “truthful” interpretation of the observable world. This interpretation constructs a recognised model which defines “what it means to think” (Deleuze, 2004 p. 170). That is, “to think” as the capacity that agglutinates all elements for which a concept or identity is said from one thing and not another. However, this implies the recognition of a thinking subject, which, as has been said, “grounds” all the elements that form the object by the means of judgement. As I argue through this dissertation, this image of thought has remained “sovereign” and has become the legitimate measurement through which is decided the validity of all other coming approaches. That is the case, for example, of the construction of minor (which would be better to call belittled) and majoritarian knowledges and authors, formal and informal sciences, hard and soft sciences, etc. In this sense Deleuze argues:

“(…) Thereafter it matters little whether philosophy begins with the object or the subject, with Being or with beings, as long as thought remains subject to this Image which already prejudices everything: the distribution of the object and the subject as well as that of Being and beings. (...) We may call this image of thought a dogmatic, orthodox or moral image.” (Ibid, 2004 p. 167)

Likewise, in his work, *The Order of Things*, Foucault’s criticism of western

ontological formation reaches similar conclusions. Being a product of the thinking subject, order (distribution) and hierarchy lie at the heart of the problematic of modern philosophy; he terms it the phobia of anthropologism. However, as described in this section, by explaining the attachment of being to the concept formation Deleuze also opens the door to the possibility of isolating difference from identity and hence, reason's point of view. Deleuze's shift consists here in putting the idea of difference at the centre of the discussion beyond the question of being's point of view. Taking this into account it is possible to re-think under new lenses the ontological perspective which lays at the bowels of scientific thought and, hence, social sciences.

For example, the social analyses of current resistance movements have been underpinned by certain ontological thinking constructed on the basis of what Deleuze's affirms as the dogmatic, orthodox and moral images of thought whose imprint accompanies approaches such as the one based on rationalism presuppositions of subject's thinking. In other words, social theories analyse subjects as they were static objects of study capable of rationalizing their thoughts previous to any action, presupposing what it signifies to think. In addition, the representation of the already preconceived thinking should be classified, distributed into a hierarchical order imposed by the observer judgement, point of view or understanding of the world. Thus, even if, as Deleuze says, this image of thought "has variant forms" and it is true that "rationalist" and "empiricists" do not presume its construction in the same fashion" (ibid, 2004 p. 167), it can be said that this image prevails and is implicit within the thought-formation of majoritarian analyses.

Consequently, the idea of difference as unilateral determination cannot be explained by the process of conceptualisation of being. As it has been explained here, reason mediates between difference and concept. At the same time, difference can be encountered along the four aspects or elements of reason or thought construction; from specific difference included within the indeterminate concept of identity to general difference within the quasi-identity of analogy. Judgement by the means of analogy determines the distribution and measurement of difference within one category or another. Thus, it seems clear then that difference is only understood either within the idea of representation of the concept or at its edges as it delimits the relation with other concepts. This is difference as traditionally understood as general difference in its most negative

expression, there where it breaks the continuity of reason or the image of thought since these are constructed on the bases of above-mentioned elements. Then the image of thought is predetermined by the categorisation of formless matter within a determined image. However, determination of becoming form of the indeterminate cannot avoid the inclusion of certain indeterminations. The formation of thought implies the inclusion of difference or in this case no-thought.<sup>13</sup> No-thought is in this sense that what cannot be thought and exists in an abstract manner beyond and previous to conceiving thought. It is this no-thought form which, even in its negative interpretation determinates (by contradiction, opposition or contrast) the passing from one thought to another. Thus, difference is carried within the determinate forms of thought as well as in its formless no-thought. Consequently, according to Deleuze:

“Ideas are not concepts; they are a form of eternally positive differential multiplicity, distinguished from the identity of concepts. Instead of representing difference by subordinating it to the identity of concepts, and thereby to the resemblance of perception, the opposition of predicates and the analogy of judgement, they liberate it and cause it to evolve in positive systems in which different is related to different, making divergence, disparity and decentering so many objects of affirmation which rupture the framework of conceptual representation” (Deleuze, 2004 p. 360).

Similarly, representation (of thought) also carries difference within the concepts and the relation between them. Moreover, taking Deleuze’s perspective and putting difference at the centre of our analyses allows us to think difference beyond its negative and dividing role. As a consequence of this shift, a complete other image materialises. The focus lies now on its relational role, taking into account that difference delimits the identity of the concept at its centre and the relation between concepts at its edges. Additionally, it needs to be taken in consideration difference in itself as that what cannot be thought but experienced, the difference contained in the no-thought. Altogether, it conforms a system of relations between differences in which, “different relates to different through difference itself” (Ibid, 2004 p. 347). This is what Deleuze calls systems of simulacra. Since these are based upon relations between differences, simulacra can only be defined by the nature of the intensity of these relations which are

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<sup>13</sup> Deleuze uses the concept of stupidity here.

organised according to particular properties. However, it is important to highlight that these properties have nothing to do with the categories of representation since there is no hierarchical distribution among them. The combination of these properties does not obey any privileged identity or resemblance but are “constituted by difference, and communicate with others through differences of differences” (Ibid). They organise as what Deleuze calls crowned anarchies. It is in this very sense, as I have mentioned in the introduction of this section that Deleuze overcomes representation (or systems of representation) by affirming simulacra. Thus, the key of Deleuze’s theory of thought consists in putting the attention on systems of simulacra understood as positive manifestations of difference which exist prior to the conceptualisation of thought. These systems relate internality through intensities which exceed the hierarchical distribution representation.

Deleuze untied the dogmatic image of thought in order to free difference and put it at the centre of the discussion. He makes almost a political claim giving voice to difference within and for itself, re-presenting an anarchic image of thought, which takes nomadic movement as the basis for its construction. In the same way, I pretend here to put the idea of difference at the centre of social theory analyses, seeing (unclassifiable) difference in itself, not as the problem but also the solution that provides theory with the opportunity to escape the orthodoxy of traditional analyses. This means to problematise and re-think social theory’s point of view beyond the need for making (common) sense in the same way in which Deleuze argues that the function of philosophy should be that of problematising.

#### *Deleuze’s univocity of being*

Going back to Deleuze’s ontology based on his analyses of difference and repetition, he argues there are three important moments in the ontological construction. First of all, he argues that “there has only been one ontology”, that of Duns Scotus where proposition substitutes judgement. This proposition substitutes the model of judgement and is composed by: a. that what it is expressed, that is sense and the attributes of this sense; b. the subject/object of what is expressed and; c. the numerical medium by which sense is expressed. In so doing, being becomes the neutral and abstract that operates between “the universal and the singular” (ibid, 2004 p. 49). Thus, being is univocal since it can be said “in a single and same sense of all individuating differences” (Ibid 2004 p. 45). However, univocal being does not mean that there is no distribution, but this

is understood as one of a different sort. This is not as the common and good sense attributes of judgement or division of what is being distributed but “rather a division among those who distribute themselves in an open space” (Ibid 2004 p. 45- 47). This is what Deleuze calls nomadic distribution referring to the way in which things occupy unlimited spaces of the univocal being which is now One and All. One, since being can be said of everything and all since what it can be said is not subjected to representation of reason anymore. Measure it is here assumed by the potential power, not as something restrictive but a capacity (independent of how big) to leap over the limits that separates forms. This distribution, which is not subjected to any law of judgement or analogy, is then, according to Deleuze, nomadic and anarchic distribution.

The second formation is characterised by Baruch Spinoza’s approach to ethics in which ontology is marked by a positive view of being. Being is then affirmation and divided into substance, attributes and modes and the relations between them. This is to say, essential attributes can only be said of the substance while substance, although it is independent, can only be said of the modes. Modes, however, are dependent on the substance in a different sense as themselves. Being refers to the power that allows the relationship between the parts of this proposition, being is then becoming and therefore is multiple (because attributes are multiple), infinite, universal and unique. In other words, being is the power which motivates the “identity of that which is different” (ibid, 2004 p. 50). Consequently, identity becomes secondary to the construction of the concept and opens for the possibility of difference to have its own concept (ibid).

Nietzsche’s thought completes Deleuze’s third moment of ontological construction taking into account the previous two. Thus, the process of becoming other than the identical is what he calls the eternal return. This is to say that what it repeats is not the same, but the same of what is difference since only what exceeds identity contains the possibility of movement. Returning is identity but as a secondary principle which Deleuze calls repetition. In this sense, a univocal being can only be thought as eternal return of all differences (ibid).

Once again it is worth highlighting here Badiou’s (2000) remarks regarding the univocal being of Deleuze which he based on some epistolary exchange and upon which he wrote an entire book about Deleuze’s thought. The *Clamour of Being* is dedicated to refuting Deleuze’s being. However, the bases of their disagreement, according to authors such as Smith (2003), Crockett (2013) or



Roffe (2012), seems to be grounded on Badiou's misunderstanding of Deleuze definition of univocity. He understands unity as the singularity of the One and rather that as Deleuze himself portrayed as uniqueness. Generally, his readings tend to simplify Deleuze arguments and exclude what is not of his interest. However, Deleuze answer to Badiou can be summarised partially by a single sentence contained in the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition*. Regarding the univocity of being as unity pointed out by Badiou's criticism, Deleuze argues that "Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which is said differs: it is said of difference itself" (Deleuze, 2004 p. 45). In other words, difference in itself exists in everything but once it is said it becomes part of a concept representing an object and therefore measured and compared, even though, the faculty of differing belongs to difference itself and therefore is multiple and infinite. Henceforth it does not make sense speaking about the univocity of being as a synonym of "unity" since difference in itself is multiple once brought to the experimental ground. This seems to go back to Heidegger's ontology of difference where difference is not something "negative in Being but to Being as difference; it refers not to negation but to questioning" (Ibid, 2004 p. 77). Likewise, non- Being is also Being but not as negative but as the problem and question and thus, (non)-being is difference (ibid). In the same sense, Deleuze also makes clear what is his interpretation of the concept of monism when providing an account of Bergsonism time: "There is no contradiction between this monism and dualism, as moments of method. (...) All levels of expansion (*détente*) and contraction coexist in a single Time and form a totality; but this Whole, this One, are pure virtuality. This Whole has parts, this One has a number – but only potentially. This is why Bergson is not contradicting himself when he speaks of different intensities or degrees in a virtual coexistence, in a single Time, in simple Totality" (Deleuze, 1991 p. 93). In this sense, for Deleuze there is nothing then beyond difference. Difference is not a condition because it occurs immanently, it is experienced and it is transcendental because there is not presence outside difference (Colebrook, 2005 p. 225). Thus, one should talk of difference rather than of Being.

In any case, Deleuze goes further in his task of redefining philosophy beyond an ontological stand by proposing a new epistemological reading derived from his diagnosis of the image of thought. He proposes a new form of thinking based on an "orgiastic representation of determination" (Deleuze, 2004 p. 53).

This is, since one can only talk of being as difference, thought it represents itself as event in nomadic and anarchic alignment within the immanent world. It is in this sense that Deleuze proposes a shift in the thinking process beyond the representation of the subject and for which a new epistemological understanding is needed. This epistemological shift which, I already argued in chapter II, has been undertaken by feminists approaches in a way in which the ontological and epistemological positions are interwoven with each other.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have presented two major philosophical pillars sustaining my argument regarding what I claim is the failure of social theory to provide an account of current urban resistance movements. As I have already mentioned at the beginning, I do not aim to provide a totalizing alternative theory but to open the possibility of a debate. Likewise, I am afraid a whole dissertation and even less, a chapter, are not enough to discuss all the philosophical approaches that have influenced the different views presented here. However, I am convinced that the argument I have introduced here should suffice to put the ontological approach of majoritarian social theories at the centre of the problematic.

Firstly, I present Foucault's archaeology of western science. He proposes several moments or episteme that have conformed a knowledge which has increasingly lost its bounds to the supposedly represented subject/object. This argument constitutes the focal point of my critique of social theory. This is the excessive compartmentalisation, division and hierarchy of the subject/object of study which thus turns social theory towards itself. The second part of the chapter is dedicated to present the possibility of another image of thought. Deleuze overcomes Foucault, not only by reconsidering ontology but also by proposing a different epistemology based on liberating thought from being as an act of some transcendental subject. In so doing, being is not understood anymore as a substance but a becoming multiple of difference. In this sense, being is univocal since this becoming can be said from all differences. Deleuze and Guattari philosophical thinking is not built up on the bases of identities but on its differences as that what exceeds the same. That is to say, by posting the image on the mirror, the simulacra what flights representation, as that what it becomes. These flights do not follow a linear ordering, nor do they follow a hierarchy, but they arrange themselves in an anarchic and nomadic order, hence becoming an

inorganic form.

It is in this sense that I propose to think resistance movements again, once one admits the possibility of thinking beyond the objectivation and conceptualisation of intellectual gurus; once one contemplates the differential relations and intensities of these resistances and not their externally constructed identities; only then can one speak of an infinite body of relations, passages and flights which, despite not being a ground, can be determined as representation within an infinite movement of the multiple. It is then when the transcendental becomes immanent. The next chapter IV will expand on this question by examining how current feminist theory goes a step further in shortening the division between the ontology and epistemology by putting the body at the centre of their ontological thinking.

#### **IV. TOWARDS AN ORGIASTIC REPRESENTATION OF FEMINISM**

I started chapter III by explaining Foucault's critic to the ontology of modern scientific knowledge. He focuses on a genealogical analysis regarding the increasing disagreement between knowledge and the representation of the subject/object. I followed up his argument with Deleuze's theory of thought which proposes an ontological shift by explaining the image of thought beyond the point of view/subject. Deleuze and Guattari's work goes further by redefining the ontological stand that gains back the distance with epistemology. Likewise, current feminist theory, whose theories emanate from their own development as a field, echoes these approaches by including the feminist sexed subject in the discussion. In so doing, feminist theory not only provides a new meaning to the act of thinking from an ontological perspective but also to what is pre-determined as philosophical thinking. In this way, this chapter expands on the previous ones dedicated to exploring in more depth the ontological construction that underlies and underpins social (movement) theories, so providing an account of the assumptions that social theory faces when analysing current resistance technologies but also providing alternative perspectives. For these reasons, here I complete (but do not close) the theoretical explanation of the ontological approaches that support this dissertation's interpretation of the social body.

In this chapter, I review the development of feminist theory to justify their more dynamic character but also to introduce those epistemologies that in my view challenge and also overcome traditional hetero-patriarchal approaches to social movements' analyses. Taking into account feminist theory and the feminist subject beyond the walls of what has been isolated as a secondary or a minor field, – for which only women and non-normalised sexualities are supposed to be interested, – it provides an honest and ethical point of departure for analysing the complexities of current resistances movements. This is analysing the margins from the margins. I argue, feminist resistance is embedded and embodied within their own evolution as a theory and, hence, offers a more accurate interpretation of everyday life politics which lay on the background of current resistance collectives.

I introduce this chapter by reflecting on why it is significant to consider feminist theory within the general analysis of resistances movement. In so doing,

I briefly review the development of the theory in what has been named “feminist wave” and the debates between the different approaches. This is the discussions, between white feminisms, black feminisms and post-colonial approaches as well as their theoretical arguments such as the distinctions between sex and gender, the debates around the subject, egalitarianism, difference and the post-structuralist arguments. Meanwhile, the last section focusses on the body as ontology based on Deleuze’s understanding of identity as a multiplicity of its differences.

### **The importance of feminist approaches in social theory**

Several reasons influence the purpose to include a chapter on feminist theory. Firstly, the ontological discussion regarding the subjugation of difference to identity expressed in previous chapter is acknowledged and contained within their own deliberations as a field. Their own development has been fed by structuralist approaches as well as by Foucault and Deleuze ontological discussions, in parallel with a continuous self-criticism and self-reflection as a result from their own discussions and disagreements as practitioners. In fact, feminist authors explicitly declare this disagreement with representationalist ontologies when criticising politics based on identitarian categories: “The objective would be to dismantle policies based on identity representation, which are somehow narratives of the exception against the majority, and to enter into the analyses of affects, the spatial-temporal and corporeal convergences.” (Platero, 2012 p. 38)

Secondly, as I will expand in further, feminists’ resistances have well included some of the ontological discussions within their epistemologies and vice versa (see for example the way in which queer ontological discussions and queer practices are interchangeable). Current feminist theory and feminist practices cannot be understood without each other, for both have developed hand in hand, listening, criticising and self-reflecting on one another. To write feminist theory is then an act of resistance in itself, a refusal to be the “dutiful daughter” as per De Beauvoir words, and a political act (Braidotti, 1993 p. 2). For this reason, feminist theory cannot be separated from its epistemological knowledges (ibid), nor can it be separated from its methodologies as I will highlight in the next chapter. As Teresa de Lauretis puts it, “to write theory is partly to tell about practice, since theoretical reasoning generally refers to things which already have names” (De Lauretis, 1990 p. 25).

, by introducing feminist theory, I pretend to conclude my theoretical

argumentation, not only presenting feminist theory as a discursive field which is in constant change more in accordance to current resistance movements but also to write beyond the phallogentric field of social science. In so doing, I expect to rethink social theory from the margins towards a displacement of the centre. In other words, I state that feminist theories not only account for current feminist resistance but expand science beyond its “Oedipal structure” (Braidotti, 1993 p. 2; 2011b). This is transforming social theory thinking process by disobeying “the master” and “mistresses” (Ibid) enforced by the western academic scientific rules.

Likewise, I do not pretend here to write a feminist focused dissertation only but from a “feminist objectivity” (Haraway, 1997 p.284; Haraway, 1988), “being there” or “dasein” where feminist theories do not indicate a minor “other” perspective in relation to oedipised majoritarian approaches but a perspective in its own right and denounce in themselves. This means I argue social science approaches need to reconsider current resistance analyses having feminist ontology as a necessary point of departure. Feminisms, in its multiple approaches, facets and its horizontality transverses all disciplines putting on the table questions of culture, economy, politics, history, racism, social reproduction, diversity, care, etc. Nonetheless, I cannot exhaust the broad account of feminist theories and authors here, nor do I wish to enforce a perspective to what social theory should be. This chapter pretends to contribute to the general argument of this dissertation by presenting a brief explanation of how feminist theories and practices have been capable of revealing a different way of thinking which challenges the construction of fixed identities and questions, the very ontological grounds of social (movements) analyses and, by extension, philosophy.

### **From equality to feminist multiplicity**

Since feminist theory cannot be completely separated from its practice, an explanation on how feminist theories affect the ontological discussion pretended in this dissertation requires brief contextualisation. Let us remember that the anti-representationalist approaches supported during this dissertation have been mostly developed along the 70s and 80s, initiating what has been called the crisis of modernity or crisis of representation. In terms of a theoretical discussion, the representation argument is mostly contained in what has been known as the feminism of the third wave, queer feminisms and later on, trans-feminisms. This thesis’s arguments are accordingly mostly inspired by these theories. If it is true

that transformations of feminist theory, as well as its process and changes, cannot be understood without considering previous struggles, the passage from one moment in feminist theory to another has been marked by feminisms' own criticism and struggles. Being considered a "minor" theory by majoritarian approaches, feminist theory has been pushed to the edges/margins and hence kept in continuous resignification and movement.

Then, first wave feminism was influenced by the enlightenment period and can be dated back to the late XIX century and beginning of XX century, spreading across Latin America, US, England and Europe and developed along rights campaigns focused on suffragist processes and equality. In western societies, it was characterised for being predominately campaigned by white upper-class women yet ignoring the claims of others whose singularities lied beyond those privileged as pointed out by Sojourner Truth in 1851 (Truth, 1997 p. 231).

From these criticisms a new debate arose, and thus, the second wave of feminism starts to take place. Identifying those criticisms of the first momentum, the second wave embarked on a fight for the institutional recognition of differences (Colebrook, 2000: 76). However, the civil rights approach which characterised the feminist movement between the 1950s and 1960s (Walters, 2005) has not always provided an explanation for all women differences. Like the first wave, these claims were mostly canalised by white, middle-class, educated women who put an idealised perception of woman and femininity at the centre of their struggle while dismissing other forms of struggles that accompany Women, such as racial and sexual discrimination and violence, social-class struggles, and so forth. While the second wave feminism puts being women at the centre of their claim, the condition of woman was not perceived in the same way. Women are not represented only by white, middle-class, educated women but are the expression of their experiences and situations within a hetero-patriarchal society which represses them. Thus, one is not only woman, but is also working-class, is black, chicane, Asian, etc., women are immigrants, sex-workers, and the receivers of countless forms of repression. They are all these situations at the same time and, hence, they cannot be separated from one another. Hence it should be spoken about Women as a social class.

This criticism was rapidly made patent by authors such as bell hooks (hooks, 1997; hooks et al., 2004) who challenged the representations of black women's body, as well as the postcolonial writings of Gloria Anzaldúa (Anzaldúa,

1997) struggling against cultural representations of *mestizas* and lesbians. Likewise, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (1991) introduces, although within a legalist context, the concept of intersectionality. That gives a legal interpretation of gender and racial discrimination within the law and pretends to contain the variety of forms expressed above. Currently, the concept is applied within a broader context and remains until today, even if it is interwoven with other approaches, such as queer and transfeminism views (Platero, 2012). From the 1990s, in addition to race, gender, class or ethnicity, this approach incorporates other interrelated dimensions of women's oppression which intersectionality authors argue are inseparable. Those approaches pass from talking about intersectionality to multiple discrimination or interlocking systems of oppression (Ibid, 2012 p.35).

Consequently, from a feminist theory perspective, during the second wave of feminism, still exists a presupposed universal, neutral and naturalised understanding of the feminine subject. In other words, women are seen under the same normalised heterosexual identity of what it means being a woman and its image or representation. The debates then turn around the separation of the concepts of matter and representation, experienced and symbolic and, sex and gender. Women's diversity was not defined by their experiences, differences or sexual identity challenging its symbolic views, but by an ideal of Woman hierarchically subjugated to that of Man. It was presumed the pre-existence of an idea of biological sex, male or female, upon which gender is constructed. Different bodies would have the need for different representational forms, but the idea of dualist sex is still maintained as pre-existent to the construction of gender (Colebrook, 2000 p. 77-78). Based on Butler genealogy of gender, Preciado argues that the category of gender is constructed and aims to "normalise" bodies which do not configure within the male/female binary machine, (Cabrera and Vargas Monroy, 2014 p.27). See for example the case of intersexual bodies, and how many of them are assigned to a gender independently and before they can even decide about their own sexual orientations.

These debates raised the question of the representation of Woman at the centre of the problematic being Simone de Beauvoir the leading figure of this period. She refuses to see woman as the negative objectivised other with respect to the masculine subject but the equal and complement subject to that of man. According to de Beauvoir, this can be achieved by the transcendence of the body;



this is the emancipation of what it subjugates women to subject of man which she refers as the immanent dimension of the body (López Jorge, 2010 p. 144). Her perspective, nevertheless, will be later disputed by Luce Irigaray, who claims that the feminist subject cannot only be thought as an equal of man's subject since the idea of subject itself has been constructed under a hetero-patriarchal symbolic order. Irigaray sees this Other as the contrary and pretends to go beyond the normativity of the subject man presented as one universal representative. In so doing, feminist difference should be understood as a real Other, not the Other relative to that of man but the Other of the Other (López Jorge, 2010 p. 149; Irigaray in Huffer, 1995 p. 8). This means to rethink the feminist Other as a positive subject from which is constructed as an Other in itself:

“The question of the other has been poorly formulated in the Western tradition, for the other is always seen as the other of the same, the other of the subject itself, rather than an/other subject, irreducible to the masculine subject and sharing equivalent dignity. It all comes down to the same thing: in our tradition there has never really been another of the philosophical subject, or, more generally, of the cultural and political subject.” (Irigaray in Huffer, 1995 p. 8)

In this sense, second wave feminism still sees the feminine subject as a complementary Other and, despite, focusing on demanding equal representation of sexed bodies, still perpetuates the dualist debates between sex/gender distinctions. As long as the idea of sex/gender obeys a hierarchical logic of conceptual creation dominated by an underlying hetero-patriarchal ideology, the feminine subject should be a complement of man. The feminine(-ist) subject must be re-built by challenging their very ontological grounds.

However, in her criticism to De Beauvoir, Irigaray defends the existence of two subjects, not a binary subject but two beings, a masculine and a feminine being. This is not far from what I have criticised in the previous chapter; this is the identification of being with the point of view. Therefore, I would like to insist here that despite agreeing with Irigaray in the necessity to reconsider the feminine subjected from the perspective of its difference beyond the male-dominated perception of being, this is, in my view, only a first step for the deconstruction of being beyond its own philosophical discourse. That is, thinking

from the point of view of the feminine subject should be a motor of change and transformation of ways of thinking, not an end in itself.

This understanding, as I will present later on, has been reproduced by other third wave feminist, queer and transfeminism authors and feminist practices. In any case, it is important to highlight here that the debates between equality (as complementary) and difference (understood the Other of the Other) remains quite actual and it is often used as recurrent argument of conflict between “old” and “new feminisms” as it has been coined (Gil, 2011). If well it is true that this is in many occasions a debate that is very alive, the discussion between old versus new feminism is also perceived as recurrent way to illegitimate and confront feminist approaches publicly, deviating the attention from more in-depth discussions.

In other cases, these debates depend upon cultural situations, experiences or even countries where the debate develops. This is, for example, the case of the Spanish State which, I use as a reference here and where – not without tension – both approaches have cohabited and collaborated. Feminism in the Spanish State, because of its historical and political context, has evolved hand in hand with anti-Franco’s, working class, neighbour’s and lesbian movements, which, later on, approached transsexual collectives (Gil, 2011 p. 131; Solà et al. 2013). The reality of the Spanish feminist movement is built upon heterogeneity of experiences coming from left-wing collectives after Franco’s death (November 1975), more than on specific theoretical approaches. For example, in Barcelona, as Rodó de Zarate argues, already in the 1970s the struggles of the working class, women and nation appear together represented by the moto-poem of Maria Mercé Marçal who was also lesbian (Rodó de Zarate, 2016 p. 158).<sup>14</sup> Likewise, the First Meeting of Catalan Women (Primeres Jornades Catalanes de la Dona) took place in 1976, as well as the creation the Catalan Gay Liberation Front (FAGC - Front per l’Alliberament Gai de Catalunya) which is still active today.

Nevertheless, the controversy between De Beauvoir’s point of view and Irigaray initiates a tendency that has characterised third wave feminisms. This is manifested in the will to go beyond the debates between sex and gender, the

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<sup>14</sup> “I am grateful to fate for three gifts: to have been born a woman, from the working class and an oppressed nation. And the turbid azure of being three times a rebel.” (Maria Mercé Marçal, 1977)

symbolic and the material, the representation and the experience, macro and the micro-politics of the body, etc. In short, there is an increasing predisposition to leave dualist debates aside and write towards the construction of a more inclusive feminist theory capable of explaining the embodiment of sexual differences and multiplicities that go beyond dualist discussions. In the case of the Spanish state, these debates can be traced back to the feminists' assembly that took place in Granada in 1979. During this conference, it was manifested the divergences between equalitarian approaches supportive of a more institutional approach to their struggles and those whose practices are located on the margins and oppose to it. These last groups are, in many cases, willing to embrace the existent of such fragmentation. The controversy reached to such an extent where a large group abandoned in protest for the participation of political parties and institutions (Gil, 2011 p. 61). The debate regarding the institutionalisation of the feminist movement kept on expanding during the 1980s and 1990s. However, both approaches kept on working together, generating new debates and campaigning together on topics related to abortion, violence against woman, etc.

Thus, third wave feminisms, as well as queer politics, challenge the construction of certainties by producing complexities and dynamics in favour of building up relations, affinities, strategies and new discussions.<sup>15</sup> Queer theory, more specifically, promotes the appropriation and resignification of structures and categories underlying every aspect of life in favour of becoming fluid subjects. That is to say, queer theory not only focuses on deconstructing the concept of gender, but, drawing from Foucault concept of biopolitics or Derrida's concept of deconstruction, queer theorists' question how hetero-patriarchal ideologies underpinning political structures and institutions which enforce oppressive power upon those who do not fall within the hetero-normativity of the masculine subject.

Among, third wave feminism and queer authors, such as Butler (1990), it is argued, that speaking of the sexed body is already discursive and representational. The body, in this case, is a political effect of representation although it can act as grounding. However, the focus on how the body acts as grounding already presumes certain epistemological conditions for experiencing its representation (Coleborok, 2000: 81). Other authors such as Braidotti (1993, 2011b), Grosz (1994) or Gatens (1997) and others, argue that while the body can

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<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to mention that Queer has never had its negative connotation in the Spanish context since it was introduced from the English in its resignified meaning.

only be expressed immanently it possesses the power (*pouvoir*) of affecting its representation (Colebrook, 2000: 78). For this reason, they rather focus on the ontological question; this is the nature of the division between the immanent body and its being. In this sense, many third wave feminisms, perhaps with the exception of Butler and other Anglo-American authors, have adopted Deleuze's transcendental immanence philosophy by putting the body at the centre of their theory, not as a ground but as political intensity capable of affecting experience. That opens for the representation of the body to be re-signified. The body is then a passage towards becoming; this is, a line flight between transcendence and immanence containing the potential (in the sense of Foucauldian power) of difference. By specifically putting the feminist body at the centre as the container or signifier of non-re-presentable potentialities, third wave feminists drive the theory of thought towards a new shift characterised by a new ontology of the body at the same time than making a political statement.

In summary, third wave feminisms have taken good note of the existent debates around the crisis of representation discussed by other authors, such as Derrida's deconstruction analyses, Foucault genealogy of power and knowledge or Deleuze and Guattari transcendental immanence as well as their idea of becoming for example.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, they have also theorised and in many occasions enriched the theoretical accounts by seriously portraying epistemological explanations that reflect on their own contradictions and experiences as gendered/sexed subjects.

Consequently, current feminist theory cannot be thought without considering the embodiment of the feminist subject in opposition to the neutral, homogenised and universal subject presented by majoritarian male-dominated approaches (Braidotti, 1993 p. 7). A feminist philosophy is born from these reflections, which, in this sense, challenge the philosophical stand of majoritarian ontologies. Thus, third wave feminism is characterised by acknowledging (transcendent) difference as the starting point of their ontological thinking and the immanent body as a reflection or passage towards becoming woman as the requisite for Deleuze and Guattari's multiple becoming. For that reason, as mentioned in chapter III, the body, its affections and relations, intensities and potentialities, happens to be situated at the centre of the new (female) feminist

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<sup>16</sup> In this sense, for example symbolic politics rescues women experience, moments of feminine freedom.

subject (ibid).

### **Becoming woman or the feminist embodiment of social theory**

Contemporary feminist theory draws among others from Deleuze's theory of thought and puts (sexual) difference at the centre of the discussion as a means for transforming and changing the view of the feminist subject beyond its representation and experiences. In this sense, feminist theory, as in Braidotti's words, is "far from being a reactive kind of thought, expresses women's ontological desire, women's structural needs to posit themselves as female subjects, that is to say, not as disembodied entities but rather as corporeal and consequently sexed beings" but, how can we "think identity as site of differences" (Braidotti, 1993 p. 6). In other words, "how to (re)think through this multiplicity" of feminist differences, how to think through the otherness of a feminine subject and, at the same time tying feminist theories to a new thinking where multiple feminists' subjects are acknowledged (ibid, 1993 p. 10) and embedded.

As it has been expressed in previous sections, if positive difference (in a Deleuzian sense) is at the centre of ontological thinking, it does not make any sense to talk about Being as something fixed transcendentally given from the outside. Being can only be sensed through the becoming of difference. In so doing, Deleuze redefines what it means thinking beyond the discussion of the point of view. To think is to act, it implies movement, transformation and becoming by the means of intensities, affections and desires, which cannot be measured neither be judged. That is to say, becoming does not mean to imitate or to construct an identity or an analogical relation with a form but to extract its particles and transform its relations through difference (Deleuze, 2004 p. 300). Accordingly, becoming-woman refers to the process of regaining that which has been stripped from Woman by constructing the concept. In so doing, women reclaim the "atoms of womanhood capable of crossing and impregnating an entire social field, and of contaminating men, of sweeping them up in that becoming" (ibid, 2004 p. 304). Recognizing this becoming-woman is not so much of a conceptual form but a molecular body, composed by particles which are part of the an-organic body, a Body without Organs that exists beyond the dualist opposition of the feminine and the masculine. Being is then the act of thinking, the transformation from one molecular form to another and, therefore, it cannot be fully thought outside this passing from one becoming to another; being is then

becoming-body.

Likewise, that active and positive force of becoming can be expressed as multiple becomings since there are, according to Deleuze and Guattari, multiple means of becoming. Hence, being becoming-woman is the starting point. The body lays then in-between of these dualities; it is a passage, a line of flight that allows passing from one molecular form to another. According to Deleuze and Guattari, although becoming is already molecular (ibid, 2004 p. 6), it is becoming-woman that what beholds the passage key toward other (multiple) becomings. Becoming-woman is the result of the body own doubling (Grosz, 1994 p. 196). The body is then, as Colebrook puts it, "the site of the distribution whereby it becomes as a body" (Colebrook, 2000 p. 89). It is in this sense that the body allows passing from one difference to another differential identity. Thus, inevitably, the body is subjected to an ethical and political role (ibid), which in current feminist theories is seen as a mean, an open possibility to reverse, question and problematise the hetero-normative ontology of social science.

Thus, retaking Braidotti's initial question, thinking woman's identity means thinking through its becoming, thinking through its multiplicities and differences. The question would be; how this multiplicity organises in order to be perceived as a common an-organic body? One starts to understand that the question is not only to think about the representation of gender but that the (sexed) subject woman needs to be reconsidered also. What does it mean to be a Woman within in a hetero-patriarchal society? What about all the excluded differences that do not fit within Woman's conceptual framework? In a way, it does not make sense to speak of the subject Woman because Woman, as it is understood, does not exist. Simon de Beauvoir already said "one is not born a woman, but becomes one" but now Monique Wittigs argues lesbians are not women since by their only existence proves that women as "natural group" do not exist (Witting, 1997 p.309 - 310) This affirmation implies to comprehend that there is a definite break with previous equalitarian feminism in favour of the inclusion and embracement of other realities and (sexed) differences of those excluded bodies inhabiting the margins of "womanhood" who also claim new forms of organisation.

However, an answer to these questions can be denoted from the paradigmatic shift coming from third wave theorist and queer politics along the 1990s. At the beginning of 2000 queer identity was starting to be relativised. The transgression of their practices is not understood anymore as a political act since

difference is being hijacked by the capitalist market as a trademark. Difference is now an individualising and aesthetic sign. However, once again feminists' theories are well aware of these critics. Thus, trans-queer-lesbian-butch-gay groups etc. began to appear and reformulate themselves by trying to provide an answer to the questions regarding individualism and the creations of bonds left aside by the first queer theories. In the Spanish State, these views are ultimately driven by the work of Paul (Beatriz) Preciado and groups such as Grupo de Teoría Queer (Queer Theory Group) and seminars promoted by some universities (Gil, 2011 p. 195).

### *Feminisms and difference: post-identity feminisms*

As mentioned before, current feminisms are thought of as a discursive field of action which is not exclusively limited to self-appointed feminists' groups and spaces (Cabrera and Vargas Monroy, 2014). Thus, retaking Braidotti's question mentioned above, this section focuses more specifically on how feminism has dealt with the question of difference and yet maintained its identity. Using Irigaray's expression, I explore how feminisms become the other of the Other from the point of view the excluded, the margins, that it's the different. In that sense, feminism is an uncompleted process subjected to internal debates, "political tensions y theoretical complexities, opening new dimensions in the process" (Cabrera and Vargas Monroy, 2014 p. 21). One only needs to refer to the black feminism in the 1960s, the lesbian feminists, the identities on the margins such as those from Chicanas, postcolonial, African feminisms transsexual, queer, etc. to comprehend that, perhaps, feminism was never a closed definition. In that sense, the conflict between equality understood as the universality of the identity and difference as a line of flight, a mere circumstance as I have pointed out in the previous chapter, remains at the centre. As in Preciado's words:

"We will have to leave the regional comfort of feminism as a specialised theory in the oppression of women to make the transversal analysis of oppression (bodily, racial, gender, sexual, economic) a theory of social transformation and redefinition of the limits of the public sphere. (...) It is about establishing networks, proposing cultural translation strategies, sharing collective experimentation processes; not so much of labelling models of de-localisable revolutions, as of what we might call "putting in

common" living revolutions"" (Preciado, 2009 p. 58)

Generally, these views are nearer to current resistances movements based on autonomous principles constructing new decentralised maps that critically question and transform traditional feminism by integrating previously ignored discourses related to issues criss-crossing sexuality such as migration, race, HIV, sexual diversity and transsexualities, functional diversity, institutionalisation issues, the precariousness of modern life, etc. Given the increasing social complexity, sex and gender does not suffice to provide an explanation of the reality within which multiple differences develop. There is then a politicisation of sexuality directed to visualise non-heteronormative and non-coitus-centralised forms which transverses everydayness practices and the bodies of the others Other. There is a need to find a way to organise social networks and include all these claims which, in many cases. In so doing the biopolitics of the body are at the heart of these resistances which are likewise moved by relations, flights, desires and potentialities (Silvia Gil, 2011 p. 94- 98). At the same time as seeking to reinvent themselves, the transformations proposed by these resistances are more related with symbolic dimensions directed to destabilise and question hegemonic discourses on gender and sexuality. There is a mutual recognition in this process of (multiple) becoming other than a fixed category/identity in need of legal reinforcement or an externally designated sexual assignation. Thus, despite the apparent disconnections between groups, it is evident the existence of common struggle which pushes those groups to cooperate, henceforth changing the traditional perception of feminist resistances. It in that sense that Paul Beatriz Preciado argues:

"There is not and cannot be a unique and exportable feminist program, derived from an essential identity or from a common oppression. We could say that, in this sense, the landscape of contemporary feminism is deleuzian: it is made of minorities, of multiplicities and singularities, and all this through a variety of reading strategies, reappropriations and interventions which cannot be reduced to the defense slogans of the "woman". "identity", "freedom", or "equality". (Preciado, 2009 p. 58)

In the Spanish State, for example, as has been mentioned previously, the feminist movements were conformed, already at their early stages, by a diversity of



collectives such as anti-Franco, working class, anarchist and lesbian movements which gave a different character to the feminist struggle beyond the different theoretical perspectives. Therefore, the debates between feminists in favour of providing a legal frame to their claims and independent autonomous militants took place at the core of the movement and not on the outside. This implies that, despite the differences, there has always been a mutual recognition. The visualisation of these bonds has been manifested on not a few occasions, such as in the preparation of debates and seminars, or campaigns against sexual violence or abortion. Clear examples of this can be recalled during the preparation of events such as Woman's day on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, the sexual pride events on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July or, the October-Trans which consists of a variety of events celebrated around the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, day in support of the no-pathologisation of transgender people.

Within today's feminists' stances, as the above explained, transfeminism approaches stand out by explicitly expressing the fluidity of these bonds. Transfeminism first appeared as a manifesto written by Emi Koyama in November 2000 who attempted to build some links between trans and feminist movements (Koyama, 2003) whose relations were notably tense (Solà, 2012 p.269). However, in the Spanish context, those tensions did not create a fracture, and transgender women had long participated in feminist assemblies since the Feminist Conferences of 1993 (Ibid). In the Spanish State, the word first appeared during the Feminist Congress of Cordoba in 2000 in a paper titled "Woman or Trans?" by Kim Pérez. It is not until the Feminist Congress of 2009 in Granada when it was more clearly articulated in the Transfeminist Manifesto (Gil, 2012; Solà and Urko, 2013) Transfeminism was adopted as concept to define those struggles against the heteronormativity. One could not talk about transfeminism as a defined movement in a traditional manner, but as a sense and a way of doing which draws from queer politics but at the same time differs in the means in which it recognises the struggle against different sexual oppressions at its core. Transfeminism practices then combine all (trans)feminisms and none by creating crisscrossing relations between them, coming from the lesbian-trans-gay-cripple-butch-bitch resistance collectives. Thus, transfeminism talks about transversal and heterogenic relations, about intersections, desires and affections; it talks about theory and practices, blurred boundaries, intersections between the thinking and the acting subject, about feminists' technologies, feminists'

economies, post-porn politics and sexualities, sexual work, postcolonialism, etc.; and finally, all this is said from a recognition of their autonomy and situation; transfeminism reinvents resistance coming from theories within their practices with all their complexities (Preciado, 2013; Solà, 2013; Valencia, 2013) and multiplicities, which include from Deleuzian authors to Haraway's situated knowledges (Haraway, 1988). Transfeminism intends to be a form of political expression which effects and transforms life. Hence the focus lays not so much on defining their identity as in claiming a common project for social transformation. In so doing, transfeminism (not all groups) combines no-mixed with mixed spaces, since in their will for transformation is recognised the need also to transform masculinities. Thus, some resistance groups and projects, like the one in which I participate, La Fondona (of which I will speak in future chapters), are integrated within non-strictly speaking feminist environments, such as squats, social centres, cooperatives, etc. At the same time, their practices and networks travel from within the groups where they participate which are not necessarily feminist towards the outside between affinity groups or otherwise. It is with these transfeminisms' understanding of the world with which this dissertation has mostly grown alike, as they relate to differences at the margins beyond universalisations and conceptualisations imbedded in the everyday practices of our bodily and experiences.

In conclusion, I would not be faithful to what I have experienced as an activist if I pretend here to categorise or ground feminists' identities since they can only be seen as a body of commonly acknowledged affinities and desires. The question is not so much about how they identify themselves in opposition to the other but how do they build up awareness, relationships and networks according to their differences and while so doing, reinvent and transform their relations and shape others.

As a result, becoming-body can be said of being and no-being. Nevertheless, (no)being is understood here in Deleuzian sense as univocity, composed by an aggregate of multiple attributes which distribute themselves along the space in a horizontal, anarchic and nomadic manner beyond order and hierarchy, hence constituting a Body without Organs. Current (trans)feminist and queer theories and its practices then exceed Woman by presenting (an)other(s) feminist multiple subjects which perceive themselves as one and multiple ever-becoming feminist identity. However, identity in this sense means the identity of

that what is different, and thus it becomes a secondary since it is the identity of what exceeds and transforms itself into something else. Identity becomes then an aggregate of relations, defined as “the particular and finite expression of a dynamic substance, and as an expression that affirms becoming in general” (Colebrook, 2000 p. 88). That is to say, becoming-woman requires re-signifying the body as a differential identity. It is in this sense that I refer to current feminist theory and its political practices as orgiastic representations.

Thus, current (feminists) resistance are not related anymore to fixed identities, ideologies or particular collectives which pre-exists the struggle, but they inhabit more complex and irregular processes where their multiplicities are acknowledged and embraced hence, creating a compromise and responsibility in order to fight the material conditions of their oppression. That does not imply it is free of debate since there are positions which argue “whether the critic to gender binarity can lead to the invisibility of unequal relations between men and women” (Solá, 2012 p. 273). Against this argument, tranfemism points out to the relations of power that derive from that binarity as well as to the creation of vector relationships to resists such power relations. Despite what could be thought, these resistances are not a mere reaction or a confrontation but the expression of desire and affections which affirm difference from within the biopolitical body and therefore are profoundly related to the ethics of the body. For majoritarian social theory is to deliberate if the neutrality and sterilised formula of maintaining the separation between the subject/object from the biopolitical power (*potesta*) which conceptualises them, it is still convincing beyond the academic bubble.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter recalls the development of feminist theory from first wave feminist movement to current feminist theory, which is characterised by the coexistence of third wave feminists, equalitarian feminists, queer and transfeminists theories, and more. I draw from examples in the Spanish State, since it would be later on related to the case study. The reason for including feminist theory was, first of all, because I consider their ontological development far more enriching due to the isolation suffered by phallogentric western philosophy but also because this isolation has enabled them with the possibility of a development on the margins marked by their own dynamics and criticisms while trying to reclaim their space

as a field. Thus, feminist theory does not only struggle with their own internal disagreements but at the same time with the male-dominated academia. Secondly, as consequence of the reasons explained above and because feminist theory is per se a denouncement in itself, its ontological development is also more connected to their own epistemological perspectives. And finally, current feminist theories, in concrete transfeminist approaches, openly acknowledge many of the theoretical arguments presented in this dissertation. This is, they put difference at the centre of their ontological argument, being conscious that those differences are embodied and embedded. Likewise, there is a recognition for (trans)feminist subject to be constructed commonly from within and whose relations are nomadic, inclusive and horizontal, as it has been expressed along this chapter. As a result, I claim feminist theory is at the same level of analysis as western male-oriented approaches, not as the other equal but, as Irigaray puts it, the other of the other. That is social theory has to be rethought from the point of view of the feminist subject.

In conclusion, I have here expanded on the critics to social theory which I already expressed in the previous chapters. In so doing, I have provided a more in-depth explanation of the why and how of my disagreement. Likewise, I have proposed to rethink social theory from the ontological perspective based on Deleuze and Guattari's work and feminist theorist views. That is to say, social theory needs to be redefined, taking into account difference in its own right as a point of departure. In this sense, current resistance movements should be analysed by looking at their own differential relation and affinities and not so much at the construction of hypothetical identities. Finally, I reclaim the role of feminist theory in the reinvention of a (feminist) philosophy which gets out of an imposed box and challenges current and traditional analysis of resistance movements. Not only have I problematised the ontological stand of majoritarian analyses, but I also hope to have provided an alternative view of thinking social analyses supported by what I consider fair examples of how this alternative works, hence refuting the already traditional accusation of utopian or nihilistic.

## **V. AN AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE: A METHODOLOGY**

The methodological approach to be explained in this Chapter aims to support the analysis of this research case study as well as clarifying the theoretical question introduced in Chapter I and II; how resistance movements in Barcelona make sense of their differences and actions, and to what extent these challenge mainstream social (movement) theory. This methodological framework is affected by the ontological criticism to social theory I have presented in Chapter III and IV. Thus, I envision this case study as per its differences, a Body without Organs; this is a transcendental immanent body, which can only be explained by the experience, scars, relations, and intensities that live within the multiple subjects. This means embodying those differences per se and consequently, avoiding representation and the rigidity of more rational-based approaches. For that reason, it seems to me that feminist's emphasis on ontologies of the body as well its epistemological praxes comprehend a sizeable part of the theories against the politics of representation.

I introduce here a methodological framework based on ethnographic principles explained from the stand point of my own participation as activist in the field, hence becoming myself part of the same analysis. Subsequently, the first section of this chapter is dedicated to explaining this methodological approach. I present here an ethnographic approach, having also in mind feminist methodologies of the body. The second section of this chapter presents a brief overview of the thinking and relational processes that brought me to consider current resistance movements, hence Barcelona for this research. Furthermore, I explain how and why this has varied during this process. A third section is concerned with the data gathering method. As mentioned above, I mostly support this research with primary data extracted from my own participation, but also from the conducted interviews. These last have allowed me a better understanding of the research. Likewise, as introduced in chapter II, I also have collected data from "minor literature", "situated knowledges" or "subjugated knowledges" in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze, Guattari and Brinkley, 1983), Haraway (Haraway, 1988, 1997) or Foucault (Foucault, 2003; 2001), to name a few of its conceptual variations. This means books, fanzines, workshop reports, and minutes taken in assemblies, and websites that have been written by affinity

groups, activists and collectives. I also took into consideration books and documentaries produced by members of CB, LaCol, La Ciutat Invisible, or some of the members of La Fondona, as well as those produced by local academics and researchers.

Finally, this chapter is concerned with the limitations and challenges of this methodology. My aim here is to be very honest with those difficulties that had worried me most during my fieldwork. I consider those as stimuli and assets that have enriched this research. In so doing, I do not pretend to avoid the contradictions I have faced – that every approach faces – but to remain open about the transformative possibilities that those offer. That means to face those contradictions instead of hiding or discarding them because they do not fit within my theoretical approach.

### **To speak about one's own experiences: from the ontology of the body towards an embodied methodology**

Deleuze and Foucault conversations on “Intellectuals and Power” discuss the role of intellectuals in analysing society. On the one hand, their critique is directed to the creation of institutionalised knowledge, and on the other hand, they acknowledge that “the masses no longer need him (the intellectual) to gain knowledge: they know perfectly well without illusion; they know far better than he and they certainly are capable of expressing themselves.” (Deleuze and Foucault et al., 1977 p.207). Similar remarks were already recognised by Luce Irigaray, who questions the responsibility of academics and institutions discourse in the construction of the hetero-gendered subjects (Irigaray, 2002). These precepts are in accordance with the ultimate claims of my research, hence, this methodology has tried to go beyond the idea of the representation capacity of intellectuals (Deleuze in Foucault et al., 1977. p. 209) and analyse urban resistances in Barcelona as producers of knowledge in their own right as well as examining the processes, interactions and challenges through which this knowledge is constructed.

As stated in Chapter IV, these claims are not new to feminist theorists who have long ago discussed and confronted the role of lab-created theories. This is the case, for example, of feminist theories (and practices) on intersectionality and

postcolonial approaches as well as queer and transfeminism approaches which advocate for looking at multi-layered dimensions that embody and determine the fluidity of the feminist subject, its oppression and its passages. In spite of that, little attention has been given to these views by mainstream social theory and when it has been, they have remained boxed within feminist and gender categorisations; however, there is no reason for not looking at social theory under the lenses of these feminist methodologies here. In Anzaldúa's words.<sup>17</sup>

"You attribute this shift to the feminisation of knowledge, one beyond the subject-object divide, a way of knowing and acting on *ese saber* you call *conocimiento*. Sceptical of reason and rationality, *conocimiento* questions conventional knowledge's current categories classifications, and contents" (Anzaldúa, 2002 p. 541)

Nonetheless, since the 1990s, there seem to be some changes in the tendencies by which social movements are analysed bringing theory closer to the feminist view regarding embodying methodological praxis. In this sense, Brian Holms for example states: "To sense the dynamics of resistance and creations across the interlinked world space is to start taking part in the solidarities and modes of cooperation that have been emerging across the planet since the late 1990s" (Brian Holmes in Shukaitis and Graeber, 2007, p. 42)

Consequently, to understand those "resistance and creations" it is necessary for certain involvement to exist, and therefore, to call for new methodological approaches that can provide an answer to these challenges emerging from within current resistance movements. Being aware of the complexity of urban resistance movements in Barcelona, and being consequent with Holms' proposed idea, as well as with feminist methods and the theoretical insights of this research, means to use a methodological approach which allows facing the analysis of this case study, not only with the horizontality, flexibility, and dynamism required to explain those challenges, but also avoiding the dualism and representationalism I have so criticised in Chapter III. Henceforth, despite I draw from multiple works, fields and approaches, such as Graeber (2009) and Spry (2001) on auto-ethnography, as well as inspired by the work of *Colectivo Situaciones* (Fontana, 2002) on activism-research, action-research of

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<sup>17</sup> Please note Anzaldúa's writing style mixes Spanish-Mexican words and local concepts. This is part of theoretical claims as *chicane*.

Greenwood (2000) and the visions of feminist methodologies, such as Haraway (1988, 1997), the nomadic thinking of Braidotti (2011a) and others, this research is mainly informed by the “ethnographic writing” of David Graeber. In this same sense, I aim to describe the characteristics of my participation in CB as well as the political and socio-historical context that makes it possible in a theoretically informed manner but where theory serves to the “the ultimate task of description” (Graeber, 2009 p. viii). Rather than drawing any theoretical conclusions, I want to communicate the atmosphere and discursivity of practices, processes and relations that enable the possibility of CB and how that in itself constitute a challenge for social theories analysis. This requires then, as Scholl describes on his own methodological approach which he bases on Dorothy Smith institutional ethnography, an ontological and epistemological shift. That is the recognition from a standpoint, breaking the barrier between object-subject and abandoning the idea of neutrality (Scholl, 2012 p. 15). The following lines expand on how those precepts unfold in this research’s methodology.

In doing so, one must leave aside the objectification of the subjects of study in order to become part of the subject of study, as a researcher and as an activist. Putting this into practice, I overcome what I consider is a limitation of mainstream methodological perspectives which aim for neutral sterilised analyses; this is the differentiation between me, the researcher, and them, the others. Likewise, I pretend to avoid the vampirisation of knowledge to which subjects are exposed by those analyses. In this sense, I interact with subject/object, my knowledge must/does not prevail (except for the fact that I am consciously/openly reflecting about our interactions and relations) nor are my views more valid than any others. My own transformation becomes just another more of the multiple transformations that take place and, hence, a multiplicity in itself. This makes me, as a researcher, also part of the research, which I shall complement with a constant dose of criticism, ethical reflections and (why not) embracement of the limitations and challenges which I will explain further in this chapter.

At first glance it seems that qualitative methods, and especially ethnography or any other participatory observation approach, would be most appropriate since this is “more sensible to the subtleties and complexity of human social life in a way that the quantitative method cannot” be (Bray, 2013 p. 317). As researcher, I hold the insider and the outsider point of view and have to be



able to empathise at the same time as analysing those subjects in a “critical and impartial manner” (Ibid 2013 p. 324) However, this way of interpreting ethnography still establishes a dualist distinction between the researcher and the subject; in a way there is still certain reification. In this same line, Toulmin argues:

“The notion of “observation” contains in itself a strong positivist charge, because in common language observation evokes an observer separated (and distinct) from the “objects” of “observation”. In many senses, this is simply the repetition of the classic positivist position based on Cartesian dualism” (Toulmin 1990 in Greenwood 2000 p. 31)

Regarding the concept of participation, Greenwood (2000) argues that it can be presented in many ways but focuses his critique in the fact that it is a way of acquiring knowledge from a community which passes not to oneself but to the researcher (Greenwood 2000 p. 31). Haraway, however, in accordance with Guattari’s and Deleuze’s idea of rhizomatic movement, talks about feminist objectivity which she refers to situated knowledges as “a practice of objectivity that privileges contestation, deconstruction, passionate constructions, webbed connections, and hopes for transformation of systems of knowledge and ways of seeing” (Haraway 1988 p. 584). Spry follows this line when she argues about auto-ethnography as “creating a self in and out of academe that allows expression of (long suppressed) passion and spirit” (Spry, 2001 p. 708). Following these arguments regarding the researcher involvement, Graeber states the purpose of ethnography is to describe a case in which theory should be a mere tool at its service. It would be “exploitative, insulting almost, to suggest that other people live their lives or pursue their projects in order to allow some scholars to score a point in some arcane theoretical debate” (Graeber 2009 p.510).

Therefore, as expressed in previous chapters, this research aims to challenge academic approaches by presenting how resistance knowledge practices reclaim those spaces from which they have been excluded. Although I cannot obviously ask the subjects of my research to co-work on my PhD as Greenwood suggests in his approach to action research (2000), I have tried to remain very respectful of these principles within my methodology. Even if I use ethnographic and participatory principles, I had to come to terms with these criticisms before starting my fieldwork. However, I have tried to build up this

methodological approach having in consideration the limits I face within the requirements of PhD research. Thus, I propose a methodology which, as feminist theorists have remarked, has to take into account the body as a medium. The methodology I present here pretends to avoid the critiques listed above and, as Haraway puts it, from the perspective of subjugated standpoint, to construct, talk and research in first person, speaking from my experience, emotions, and thoughts while participating from within. In these sense auto-ethnographic texts, as Spry puts it, “express more fully the interactional textures occurring between self, other, and other contexts in ethnographic research” (Spry, 2001 p. 708).

I have started this investigation as a researcher but ended up as a participant. I have learned, reflected and critically analysed the practices, discussions and conflicts I have been part of. I have shared and recorded my own transformation as participant and researcher on these pages as well as conversations with other participants. I have not only witnessed the growth of CB, but I have been part of it. This will be presented in a narrative form, recalling notes of my field diary, impressions I wrote down when reflecting on those notes, comments made on the minutes of each assembly or corridor conversations made on public forums. Nevertheless, I strictly stick to those actions, meetings, assemblies, etc. where I have participated and where I can speak from my own experience, impressions and how it affects me as a researcher. In this sense, as feminist approaches put it, I can speak from a bodily embedded methodology which aims to transform systems of analyses. Following Spry on auto-ethnographic performance, this means to write from the “body as site from which the story is generated, thus beginning the methodological praxis of reintegrating my body and mind into my scholarship” (Spry, 2001 p. 708). However, although auto-ethnography has influenced my understanding of the methodology, this research does not entirely align with it. The reason for that is that I did not felt confident presenting a report based on an entirely self-reflexive approach. On the one hand, I preferred to give space to the comments and options of other people who have shaped my understanding of CB. This was, for example, as I will expand further in this chapter, the case of one of the neighbours challenging my time-frame and the School Arcadia reminding me about the influence of the anarchists’ collectivisations in Barcelona. On the other hand, I had some concerns about presenting a narrative that could be, at times, journalistic and romanticised.

Notwithstanding, I embodied my methodological praxis in many forms. Regarding my transformation process, for example, when talking about CB processes, I usually speak in first person “I” and sometimes I will speak of “we”. This reflects my own personal transformation as a researcher as it is characteristic of auto-ethnographic and feminists’ methods. I did not try to force it in or out; it simply happens in my narrative. At the beginning of this research, when occasionally explaining CB to other people, colleagues or organisations, I referred to them as “they”, but slowly I caught me saying “we”. I tried to change it back to “they” because I thought “I am talking about my point of view” but at some point, I realised that this was part of the methodological approach I decided to take so I embraced and signified it. I was overcoming the barrier between me and “them” as pretended. Nevertheless, I incorporated this “we” but also started to introduce sentences such as “from my point of view” or “from my perspective” in order to make clear I was not representing all views in CB. At this point, I should clarify that I do not refer to “I” as me, unique and one subject, but me as “being there” or “acting there” at that particular moment, as situated and being multiple since my transformation has never been static and thus is embedded within my experiences.

At the same time, I do not only analyse the case study putting the body-researcher as a medium, but I also envision the case study as a body. Thus, following Deleuze and Guattari’s work (2004) and Deleuze’s concept of difference, I explain the relationships, assemblages, and connections, lines of flight, desires, passages and intensities as well tensions and metamorphoses of/between bodies. Thus, I speak about the body-me researcher, the body CB, the body Sants, the body Barcelona, etc., each of them being multiple and multi-layered bodies. Likewise, as mentioned in previous chapters, I put difference and the relation between those differences at the centre; hence it does not make sense to talk about structured relations but rhizomatic and therefore bodies without organs.

A rhizomatic relation, according to Deleuze and Guattari, needs to accomplish several characteristics which I will try to highlight as well in the analysis of the case study. The first ones refer to the principles of connection and heterogeneity in the sense of establishing links with any other rhizomatic connections at any point. In the case of CB, that can be grasped by looking at its

members as well as users, as people come from different and heterogeneous backgrounds not only in terms of experience and ideologies but also regarding ages and genders, etc. The second characteristic in a rhizomatic method is multiplicity. As I explain along chapter VII, CB is not structured in a hierarchal manner, but horizontally, and in that sense there has “neither subject nor object” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 8). One has to take into account the multiplicity of subjects/bodies that take part in order to understand CB if well it is true that there are different dimensions. The fourth characteristic is related to “the principle of asignifying rupture” (Ibid, 2004 p.209), which means that these relations, as rhizomatic plants, cannot be separated “across a single structure” or time. In this sense “a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines” (Ibid). Likewise, CB is the result of a long struggle started in the 1970s, but which has had many turns all accompanied by different people, methods, and tempos. At the same time, it is impossible to separate CB from its history since it was built in the XIX century, nor can it be separated from the economic and political history of La Bordeta – Sants and, hence, Barcelona. And finally, a rhizomatic relation cannot only be explained as a cartography and decalogue of relations and experience. Deleuze and Guattari argue:

“The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is in itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification, it can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as political action or as a mediation.” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 13)

In this sense, I offer a diagram of CB relations which I have divided between a genealogy of Barcelona’s multiple layers in chapter VI and the internal and external relation in Chapter VII and VIII respectively. However, I could have organised in many other ways: I could have looked at just one aspect of these relations, or I could have given it a hierarchical structure and pretended to trace

its bases back to an ideology, class struggle, identity, etc. but that would have not reflected the social complexity in which this case study is embedded (that any academic research really is). Being honest with my participation and my experience at CB and its members it would have been incompatible with the over-codification required by other methods. Taking this complexity into account has required that I apply, as per feminist theories and in Conquergood's words, an "embodied practice" where "the embodied researcher is the instrument" (Conquergood, 1991 p. 180). I have accomplished this by using auto-ethnography relying on the theoretical work of multiple authors and fields but mostly inspired by feminist ontologies of the body as a medium, as well as Deleuze and Guattari's idea of difference, the BWO and its rhizomatic relations. These concepts have remained in the back my head during the analyses of the case study helping me to guide and complement this methodology. Altogether, in order to analyse resistance movements, I have moved towards the use of unconventional research methods which puts in evidence the deficiencies of mainstream approaches.

### **Why and how Can Batlló: processes, and construction of the case study**

At a very early stage of this research, I was interested in understanding how common people who usually do not participate in resistance movements or actions make sense of them. Coming from an activist background, it always frustrated me the negative comments people make about activism being, most of the time, something they have never experienced. Their whole perception is imposed by what is "informed" in the media. Therefore, my first focus of interest was the analyses of the media discourses. Nonetheless, soon enough I realised that those mechanisms of over-simplification and over-codification were also present in some academic contexts, though adorned (in many occasions) with an empty variety of baroque, judgemental and sophisticated theories, words and rules intended to provide an air of eternal truth to the discourse. This created in me certain frustration but also a desire to contradict and (if possible) pervert these views. Thus, I decided to shift my research from analysing those creating opinion towards those creating knowledge (or veiled opinion in some cases).

At the time I started my research the so-called "Arab Revolution" was taking place, followed by the 15-M and the Occupied Movements. Those

movements were continuously analysed from the outside as if they generated spontaneously. Nobody could understand what was happening since people participating in them were very heterogeneous. I remember struggling to accept such as spontaneity if indeed it was certain that were some elements of elements of spontaneity. I could not accept someone decided to camp in Tahrir Square only out of a spontaneous impulse of dissatisfaction with the politics of the country. People joined together for more than one cause, a sediment of (unreasoned) reasons that went beyond any instrumental, structural and rational interpretations. I did not know the cause, neither do I want to improvise any here, but it struck me that perhaps the form in which those movements introduced themselves were not new as it was being analysed, perhaps we have not wanted to see their backgrounds and interactions because we have been too busy piling up analytical categories. Thus, I gathered together my frustration with academia and my political passions and decided to dig deep into the analysis of current (social) movements.

When considering the case study, I was very clear I had to take into account whether I had the ability to culturally and linguistically connect with it. Even if I do not come from Barcelona, this is a city which I have visited intensively since my childhood and with whom I share a common language (Catalan) and a common history and culture. I also had some knowledge of the anarchist history of the city and the kind of collectives and movements there. Moreover, talking to a friend of mine who lives in Barcelona about the struggles of deciding for a case study, he commented that they recently formed a feminist, LGTB+ queer group within an occupied industrial compound and invited me to join. I visited the place for a week at first, just to evaluate whether it was relevant to my research. CB should give me a starting point to analyse the knowledge, practices and nested-networks between resistance movements in Barcelona as I wanted to prove.

This research took place intensively from September 2013 until April 2014, of which Annex 1 is a summary. I spent two weeks of August in a squatted house named Can Masdeu in the outskirts of Barcelona, from where I thought I would start to get a sense of the movements in Barcelona outside of my relations. In September I joined CB. I kept a field diary of CB until April 2014. I have remained in Barcelona since. I still participate in CB but in a more disengaged manner, taking part in those actions, work groups, and events that interest me as an

activist as well as making myself available to participate in any other occasions such as workshops, conferences, etc that require a someone from CB to take part. At the same time, this keeps me up to date with CB discussions. In remaining in Barcelona – since I had the opportunity to work from here<sup>1</sup> – I also have considered it is more respectful with what I preach with this methodology, in the sense that I do not just come, gather the knowledge I need to prove my point and leave. In any case, I have made sure I take breaks in my participation in order to reorganise my thoughts and perspective. As I explain later in this section and also in Chapter VII, the participation in CB can be very demanding and intense as well because many people do not only participate from CB but in also other collectives, hence, it is common that (not only for me) its members take a few weeks/months of disconnections from time to time. This lets me see the work ahead with a new, fresh view, free from any possible tensions.

Methodologically, I tried to visualise an approach of discontinuous concentric circles, lines of flights and passages that build up a diagram of collective resistances in Barcelona. Following Deleuze's idea of the BwO (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004), I saw collective resistances in the same way; I acknowledged difference per se detaching it from the subordination to identity (Deleuze, 2004). Although groups and projects form by affinity referring to a group of friends that share a common project as Graeber claims in his work on direct action (Graeber, 2009 p. 297), once the subject is looked at beyond those affinities and identities, one finds a multitude of relational networks and experiences that enrich the subject and provide a far more interesting and realistic view of how resistance collectives work on the ground. By starting from La Fondona I just had to pull out the strings and follow lines beyond what is supposed to be the affinity relations of a group concerned with feminist issues. These brought me to CB and from CB to Sants-Montjuïc district and Barcelona.

At the same time, since I am not originally from Barcelona, I also lived in the city as a tourist and had a previous image of the "perfect city" as it has been promoted. Ultimately, when analysing resistance in Barcelona one cannot forget its history; the industrial background, the class struggles, the anarchist fights and collectivisations, the civil war, the self-managed cooperatives, the assembly traditions, the 40 years of Franco's dictatorship and isolation from Europe, the independence struggles, the autonomous movements of the 1970s and 1980s,

etc. All these constitute the knowledge subtract of today's resistances. Thus, I could see not only a multi-layered subject of study, but also the multi-layered city. Soon I realised this complexity could not be analysed by doing a survey or few interviews and observations, nor can it be done creating data categories and partial hypotheses. What is missed in these mainstream analyses is that which is in movement, the abstract machine that pushes this movement, which cannot be measured and, in definitive, the transformation of the social body, which has been called by Deleuze the becoming. For these reasons, I present this research by tracing the cartography of resistance through my own wandering and personal subject transformation, hence being nourished with the knowledge-practices created by the resistance on the ground.

Despite having a methodological design previous to the immersion in the field, I suspected that the reality would bring me somewhere else, first because the participants of my research were not going to be treated as mere objects of study, but also because they are very aware of their social and political context and thus highly emancipated and knowledgeable about the role they might be accomplishing by participating in an academic research. Since the beginning, I had in mind to do participatory research and, more specifically, an ethnographic approach which allow me for some self-reflective practices. I was to gather data through snowball methods. I had to start by participating in a feminist LGTB+ queer collective, La Fondona, which was included in a bigger project called Can Batlló. From this starting point, I was expecting to be able to link with and get to know other groups in Barcelona. I partially maintained this. However, the complexity of CB obliged me to redefine the process and so I decided to maintain my focus in CB and La Fondona mostly.

I also found out that Sants neighbourhood had a very old and extended tradition of social action. So, it was necessary to include this context in my research in order to be able to map the construction of CB. I knew little about the history of such heterogenic space. For example, when I first arrived in Barcelona, I only had a vague idea of what I was going to find in CB. I had been among activists and participated in actions previously, however, the groups were more defined, such as anarchist and squatting groups as well as radical autonomous groups and the relations between them were more sporadic, or at least so it was my perception. The first thing I noticed was that I was being welcomed without



the suspicious that accompany other groups probably because they usually are under the menace of the police. I found CB space very inclusive. The fact that Catalan is my native language also and that I am familiar with the Catalan culture probably make it more comfortable for me and easier to relate to. I did not know much of their internal processes so I decided to participate in as many projects as I could and see where I could fit/help better. After a few months participating in assemblies, workshops and working-groups, people already knew me and without noticing I was considered one more. To know about the insights, dynamics, and personalities of the different subjects-participants were determinant in the research since it was important for me to evaluate the different approaches and conflicts within the groups and put them into the context of CB and Sants- Montjuïc history.

Once I started to read more about the social movements' history in Sants, my surprise was major. I realised I was not going to be able to explain the difficulty of explaining the complexity of the relations between the different organisations taking place here in one single PhD thesis. Likewise, I had decided to start from the 1990s but as I shared that with CB members some were really upset since in doing so, I dismissed the work that their neighbours put into it since the 1970s (Interviewee Neighbour, Barcelona, 28/11/2014). Thus, I decided to dig more into the history and noticed the importance of taking into account previous struggles in order to understand CB and its symbolism as space. I definitely could not explain CB without providing an outline of previous "freed spaces" and fights, since actual collectives are the result of continuous transformations and additions of multiple subjectivities. The social richness of this neighbourhood – and I guess in many neighbourhoods in Barcelona – was going to be very difficult to explain in just a few chapters. The longer I stayed here, the more complex and fascinating it became. All this understanding was possible only because of the type of methodology, as I participated and shared my thoughts and asked questions in formal and informal spaces, giving the opportunity for people to explain their own narrative of the place, thus humanising my analysis.

Regarding the projects I got involved with in CB, most of the time I was participating as a member of La Fondona but sometimes I was participating as an individual, depending on the type of work to be accomplished. For example, I was part of the mediation commission taking into account I had acquired a

community mediation certificate and experience during my study years. I also participated in the gender observatory, the mentioned mediation commission and several other working groups and activities. From that point I started to follow the relations, actions and activities, not only toward the interior but also the exterior of CB. These usually occurred in Sants but also other places of Barcelona.

In my analysis I do not take all groups and events into account, only those where I have been directly involved, I also avoid those with which I have not strong relations because of lack of time or/and links with the other groups, such as Can Masdeu, or some feminist collectives. As mentioned above, during August 2013 I spent two weeks in Can Masdeu, from where I was hoping to get in touch with and gather more general information regarding resistance collectives in Barcelona. However, due to this being vacation period, the activity was very low. Can Masdeu is in contact with other collectives and organises events but most of them take place in their space and, due to its relative isolation in the outskirts of Barcelona, the continuation of my participation was more difficult. Therefore, it was not relevant for this research; hence I discarded its analysis.

Due to the lack of space in this research, I also had not taken into account the analyses produced by other feminist collectives with which I also was in contact. Likewise, I also do not expand on the work done by cooperatives of publishers which are important for visualising the knowledge production of resistances movements as for example, *Contrabandos*, which is a hub of publishing cooperatives managed by the publishing cooperative *Pol·len*. Although these are not, strictly speaking, resistance collectives, autonomous publishing cooperatives (as also is La Ciutat Invisible) do an enormous labour by organising events as well as publishing the work written by activists and collectives among other authors.

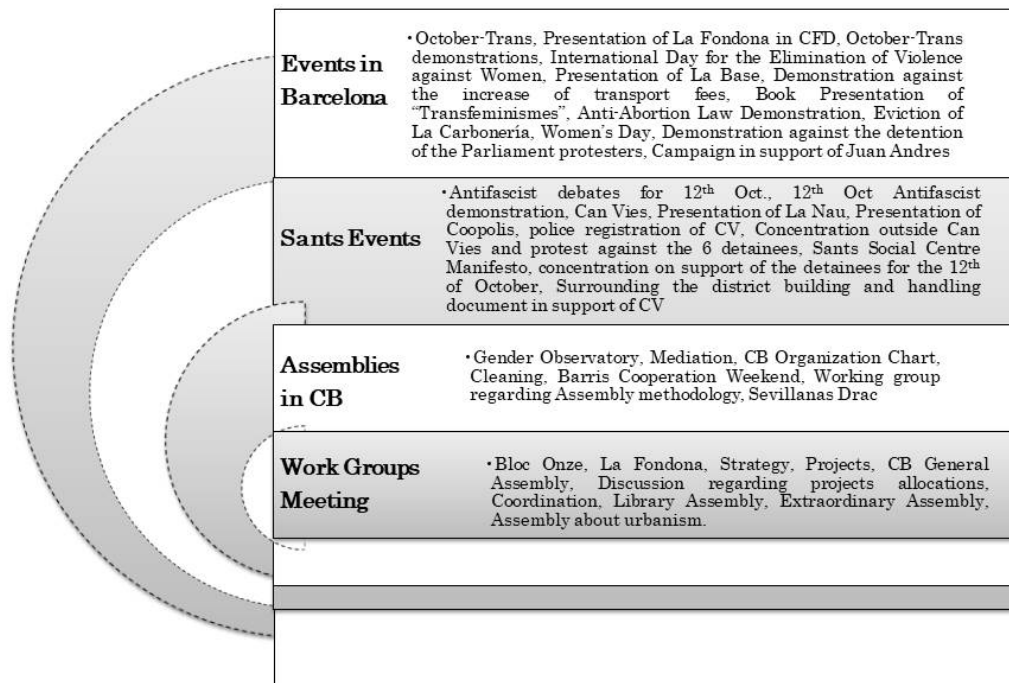
In spite of that, I have been able to gather a general overview of resistance collectives in Barcelona. Let me highlight that even though seven months of research is a long period, it is not long enough to fully explain years of social action; moreover, from a point of view respectful with the idea of not representing or talking for others. Hence, what I present in Chapter VII and VIII is my own physical and subjective wandering as an activist and researcher affecting my own transformation during that process. For example, this is the case of my shift

towards feminist theory, and especially the idea of transfeminism. After several months working with feminist groups and reading extensively about feminist theory, I realised that their work is close to what Deleuze has called becoming women, metamorphosing the other into the other of the other, as Irigaray would put it. Likewise, their theory of the body provides an ontological and epistemological expansion on Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the BwO. The groups I met seem to truly acknowledge that transformation, putting the body at the centre which is necessarily constructed through becoming minor, becoming woman. Equally, I became a researcher in this process but also a participant, and thus embodying my own research in order to experiment and generate knowledge through my own subject transformation.

### **Data gathering processes and methods**

#### *Primary Data*

Primary data has mostly been gathered through my own participation in CB. Formally, this research took place between September 2013 and April 2014 being the first two-month part of an exploratory approach. So, the core part of this research took place between October 2013 and April 2014. As mentioned previously, my participation has continued since in a more informal manner. I am still involved in the assemblies and coordination, as well as with the events and the book cataloguing activity of La Fondona, which helps me to remain up to date with current changes and developments. During the formal period of this research, I participated in 43 different assemblies and coordination meetings, 18 workgroups and workshops meetings, 13 actions and events in the neighbourhood and, 13 outside of the neighbourhood (see schedule and dates in Annexe 1). Figure 1. represents the assemblies, workgroups, actions and events where I have participated during the above-mentioned period. Altogether I have produced 23,000 words of field notes and comments.



*Figure 2. Figure representing the different activities I participated between September 2013 and April 2014.*

Another source of primary data has been the interviews conducted among the members of CB and other spaces, like publishing cooperatives. The interviews complement the methodology used in this research, together with my participatory process has informed, filled up with nuances and enriched my understanding of CB, Sants-Montjuïc and Barcelona in a way I cannot imagine it can be done by mainstream approaches.

I have interviewed 15 people from different groups who I refer to only by the name of the group they belong to. Only one person has specified the wish to be anonymous. Concerning the questions, I have used a semi-structured approach, which is aimed at the interviewees constructing their own narrative. At the beginning, I tried to use one single general question, such as "Could you explain about your experience during the Can Batlló process?" in order to get the interviewees to develop their own history. I argue that by letting interviewees construct his/her own speech, I am being more respectful of their discursive process. On the one hand, it is necessary to remember that most of the time I was in front of people with strong capabilities and knowledge about social movements, which made it difficult to direct the interview with close questions. In

this sense, I applied the norm of “just listening what they want to say”. On the other hand, CB is a well-known project, not only among the collectives in Barcelona but also in the Catalan mainstream media. For this reason, some interviewees have already constructed a narrative, not because they have a prepared official version but because they had to repeat it many times. Later on, I also realised that some of the interviewees do not feel so comfortable with such an open question and they do not react expectedly. Thus, occasionally, I had to adapt and prepare several questions in order to guide the narrative. This was the case (for example) of one of the members of LaCol (who participated in the design commission at that time) who was pretty concise and technical in the given answers. Therefore, I used a battery of supporting questions for this interview. However, most of the interviews end up with casual conversation, indicative of trust and thus a sort of narrative usually came up. In all the cases, the interview finished by asking the interviewees to express what their wishes were for CB’s future.

Narrative interviews help me to engage with interviews in a less formal/structured manner and in many cases helped to confirm or refute my views. In occasions, they have been very helpful because interviewees have clarified my understanding of Can Batlló. For example, for one of the members of the strategy commission and the neighbourhood association was very important to clarify why the background struggle of CB needs to be taken into account. The fact that I took into account only the history of CB and the neighbourhood from the 1990s onwards had deeply offended this person since his struggle dates back to the 1970s when he almost lost his home due to the new urbanism plan for the areas surrounding CB. Consequently, I reconsidered his criticism and changed my approach to CB, since I mistakenly analysed social movements in Barcelona separately from their social history of neighbourhoods.

On another occasion, my research argument was challenged as it was summarised at the beginning of an interview (interviewees School Arcadia, Barcelona 27/04/2016). In this case, I listened to their opinions but understood that we had different theoretical approaches. I assumed that I was being misjudged since one cannot explain a whole dissertation in a few sentences previous to an interview. However, I clarified to them that I do not aim to represent anybody’s views but mine. In any case, we continue with the interview and carry

on with the theoretical discussion later on in a more informal manner. Although I was not totally convinced with their argument, I still paid a good deal of attention and reflected on it. I finally included their point regarding the influence that the history of collectivisations in Barcelona had in resistance movements practices. In any case, this helped me to reinforce my point at the same time that allowed me to establish a dialogue by exchanging our perspective on the subject of my research.

Similarly, I had the possibility of talking with the first interviewee a few days after his interview regarding what his thoughts and reflections were. I also explained what my first views were. We maintained a debate about the possible criticism to activist movements, such as class struggles, the occasional excess of intellectualism, etc. Although unofficially it is really interesting to see that this person kept on thinking about his process and memories, what he wanted to say and forgot, etc.

As mentioned before, during the second interview I realised that open questions might not always work. Some people's mental processes might be more concrete and do not need to contextualise their answers. Thus it was necessary to direct the interview with more concrete questions. One of the basic principles of communication theory requires that the interviewer adapts to the interviewee. Thus I built up a plan B questionnaire in order to avoid improvisation. This second interview case, for example, the narrative seemed to be complete after 33 minutes. So I mentioned that we may conclude the interview but waited for a few minutes before closing and straight away the person decided to keep on explaining. Then, I caught up by asking about a documentary they have produced as a collective, which opened the door to find out about new projects and books to come. Another interesting thing was that this person started to talk about her experience, but always from within the collective she belongs to and linking it with her profession as an architect. Thus, she only spoke in the first person occasionally (only when speaking about the conflicts/ critics she acknowledged in CB or her views for the future). However, she recognised that they only came together because they were friends (this was also mentioned by first interviewee regarding the CDOC collective) and then they decided to form a collective; they became activists through their professional involvement with the neighbourhood.

As per the examples provided, narrative interviews helped me to shape my research, they did not dictate how I did have to conduct the research but by contributing to reflecting together about it. Most of the interviews (if not all) were friendly and relaxed, which made the conversation stretch long after the recording machine was switched off. Not only during my participation and interviews, but also during uncountable informal conversations, I was always very alert about what people had to say about my research and took into account their views. Giving the opportunity for interviewees to build their own narrative has greatly contributed to this, but also it is more coherent with the ethnographic approach discussed previously in this chapter.

### *Secondary Data*

It is important to mention that CB has a system of communication and information sharing via email groups. Consequently, the analyses of these communications have constituted an important resource to complement the data. Secondary data was gathered in different ways; a big part of it comes from the minutes taken during general and extraordinary assemblies as well as coordination meetings. Another part of it refers to the documents and dossiers created during working commissions, facilitation groups and also assemblies, such as the year dossier or the diagrams presented in Chapter VII. The minutes for the assemblies and coordination meetings are all published online and accessible to everybody.<sup>2</sup> Counting the published documents from 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 to July 2016 there are a total of 77 general assemblies<sup>3</sup> and 121 coordination meetings.

Some other data comes from the email exchange of La Fondona which I present in the below table:

Can Batlló*	Date	Emails	Date	Analysed
<b>Regarding general assembly</b>	From 08/10/13 to 04/07/16	96	From 08/10/13 to 02/04/14	20
<b>Regarding extraordinary assembly</b>	From 14/01/14 to 01/04/16	13	From 14/01/14 to 24/03/14	7
<b>Regarding Coordination</b>	From 18/10/13 to 17/07/16	88	From 18/10/13 to 11/04/14	20

*Table 1.* Table of email communications reviewed between October 2013 and July 2016

\*please note this should provide only an indicative data, at any moment I am trying to draw to any quantitative conclusion. Likewise, since all the members of La Fondona have access to this emails and different ways to archive them, it is very difficult to know how many emails have been received or deleted.

Although I also have gone through the email exchange between commissions, I have not taken those into account. Suffice to say that there is a prolific amount of interrelations and conversations between all the groups. The emails of La Fondona are divided between those received from CB, those received by other groups and collectives of the neighbourhood, the ones related to affinity groups in Barcelona or other areas and those requesting for collaboration. Altogether I went through around 300 emails and mostly took into account those related to the assembly minutes and processes that took place during my research period.

Other data has been extracted from local newspapers, such as *La Directa* and *La Burxa*. The first one has been professionalised and is one of the cooperatives of the neighbourhood, while volunteers and activists run the second one. Likewise, I have used many of the books, documentaries, articles and materials written and auto-published by members of CB and activists such as *Inventari de Can Batlló (Inventory Can Batlló)*, or *Transfeminismes. Epistemes, fricciones i otros flujos (Transfeminisms. Episteme, frictions and other fluids)*, *Les Cooperatives Obreres de Sants (Sants Workers Cooperatives)*, *Més d'una Dècada Revolucionant el Barri (More than a decade of neighbourhood revolution)*, etc. Others have also been written by local researchers and academics, such as *Merda de Ciutat (City of Shit)* and others in the case of books and articles regarding Barcelona's history, urbanism, and social movements.

## **Limitations**

Regarding the limitations of this methodology, I would highlight that although the methodology is very enriching, it is amazingly difficult to justify within the limits of a PhD and therefore I am very aware of the risk I am taking. Fitting this, perhaps unconventional research methodology within the demands of academia has been the underlying concern along the whole process. It is here where ethics come into place as an integral element of ethnographic work. I have compensated the



limitations of such an approach by thoroughly reflecting about my research and capacity to interpret the context of this research (Greenwood, 2000 p. 320). As I have explained in this chapter, most of the methodology, as well as the aim of this research, pretends to claim a space for resistance practices and knowledge within academia. I have carefully chosen a methodological approach that tries to be most respectful of the object of research.

In any case, it is extremely difficult not to feel intrusive, so my approach to it is by participating being part of the research itself, as I have explained in the first section of this chapter. This is one of the reasons Barcelona was decided upon. I speak the language and share the culture, yet I am not from the city, which also allowed me to feel part of it at the same time as to be able to take a certain perspective and avoid strong, preconceived ideas acquired prior to starting the research. The continuity and length of this research has also contributed to removing any misconceptions or simplification and generalisation that may occur during shorter terms and approaches where one has no opportunity to correct initial misperceptions. Likewise, it is important to balance the role of researcher with the role as participant and remain self-critical, and yet it is important to recognise the moments when one needs to step back and rethink. For example, let me recall some fieldwork reflections that illustrate the described difficulties, so after a slightly frustrating assembly on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2014 I wrote:

“Today, after loads of reflection on yesterday’s assembly where I was facilitating, I have discovered I have been pushing myself to lead in the wish to feel more recognised and integrated. I have realised in occasions I would like my “expertise” to be noted. I am afraid sometimes I might have forced my participation instead of stepping back and recognising the knowledge many of the participants in the assembly possess. Likewise, occasionally I have been building an unnatural relation based on an excessive criticism of myself and others. Even if I have been keeping quiet or not intervening directly in decision-making processes, there has been a nagging voice wanting people to do as I think. Sometimes my view and ego as a researcher (perhaps as an individual) comes in the way since I want my view to prevail (...) This realisation is luckily coincidental to the last part of the formal research, so after April I will just participate, relax and learn from the coming developments and narratives, not only as

researcher but also as a subject.”

I am convinced that being honest with these difficulties has helped me to improve the research; my field diary is full of these sorts of reflections where I reconsider my position again and again. I have been troubled by the idea of leadership. Although, I consider participation the most adequate approach for this research I argue it is important not to take the role of leader since one might end up more concerned about this leadership than maintaining a research perspective. Therefore, as reflected in the comment above I made sure I stepped back even if it was difficult at times. In any case, in CB it is difficult to sustain a protagonist role for anybody as the decision structures and processes are based on consensus.

Other limitations laid in the fact that I am a friend of some of the people (some of them previously to this research) I am working with which makes me more vulnerable in terms of the use I give to the conversations I have. I cannot avoid feeling invasive and try to justify myself constantly. This apparent contradiction between the traditional neutrality supposed in scientific research and my own worries has kept me alert regarding my own practices. I also have been really careful here in sharing only the experience and views with regards what I perceived during my own practice.

Another of the dilemmas that I have difficulties to answer about my methodological approach was regarding the groups I target and how do I conduct my interviews. I claim to target groups, people, and resistance at the margins but, how do I recognise them? It is difficult to be systematic in this case since my initial idea comes from the theoretical intuition that social movements are not a homogenous compound conformed by instrumental reasoning, fixed structures or ideological identities as had been traditionally analysed, but all this at once and none of them at the same time. A way I defined or thought about it was by reflecting on what happened during an impasse (this is the period of time when nobody talks about the current movements because it is supposed to be calm regarding actions and events planned) and whether there is an impasse in the impasse. I wanted to explore the margins; the lines of flights that appear in between these conceptual categorisations, thus the characteristics embraced by Deleuze's rhizomatic movements express these resistances at the margins in the

best way. As mentioned, initially I wanted to check resistance movements in Barcelona, of which CB was one more. However, the complexity and richness of CB and its contexts provided a micro-cosmos of answers to all these fears I envisioned in my initial methodological design.

To conclude, I like to highlight that the limitations and challenges of this research, despite the occasional frustrations, have been an asset as well since they have contributed to rethinking my methodological approach over and over again. Reflecting and being honest about its difficulties has, at the same time, enriched the outcome, or, as Spry argues: "Auto-ethnographic tests reveal the fractures, structures, and seams of self-interacting with others in the context of researching lived experience. In interpreting the auto-ethnographic test, readers feel/sense the fractures in their own communicative lives and, like Gramsci's notion of the organic intellectual, create efficacy and healing in their own communal lives" (Spry, 2001 p. 712) In the same sense, the theoretical, as well as the methodological approach presented along this research, pretends to contribute to the metaphorical healing of the study of (urban) resistance movements.

## **Conclusion**

Along these lines, I have presented what has been the methodological approach I have taken during this research. The first part of this chapter discusses the possible methodologies I could have used, from observation approaches to ethnographic perspectives. However, considering the criticism posted in chapter III and IV and my own ontological commitment I had to decide for a methodology which allows the case study to speak for itself without the researcher's representation. Thus, it seems clear to me that I can only represent myself and my experiences. Likewise, I draw from those authors who let me rethink the methodology from the point of view of difference. Thus, after re-thinking the subject point of view in previous chapters, especially with the work of Deleuze, I reclaim back the subjectivity of my thought to construct a research methodology based on new epistemological approaches. I reconstruct my own subjectivity as per Irigaray's other of other. For this reason, I go back to the work of Haraway and her concept of feminist objectivity. Similarly, I recall the work of direct-action researchers such as Graeber, Colectivo Situaciones and Greenwood. Finally, I focus on ethnography understood as Graeber as to "tease out the implicit logic in

a way of life, along with its related myths and rituals, to grasp the sense of a set of practices” (Graeber, 2009 p. 222) and a way of understanding research as embedded and embodied in oneself experiences and transformation. With this, I seek to present a cartography of knowledge and practices which maps Barcelona’s collective resistance.

The second part of this chapter reflects on the process that has brought me to choose CB as the case study and how I came to contact them. Meanwhile, the third part of this chapter explains which has been the data gathering process. As already mentioned, I mainly rely on my participation. Thus, I recall some of the events I have participated. I highlight I have exclusively spoken from those occasions where I have been involved directly as well as those conversations which have taken place in a public forum. Secondary data has been gathered through assembly minutes, unpublished documents, local newspapers and books produced by minor authors among others. Interviews are semistructured, and I have allowed each interviewee to follow their own narrative.

Finally, this chapter openly reflects on the limitations, challenges and concerns posted by this methodology. From ethical distresses such as those regarding the use given to friends’ conversations, to the worries related to the romanticisation of the discourse due to the methodological approach used, the limitations of such an unconventional method has been a cause of constant reflection and reviews.

## VI. A GLIMPSE OF THE MANY BARCELONAS: SANTS IN CAN BATLLÓ AND CAN BATLLÓ IN SANTS

“Urbanism is the mode of appropriation of the natural and human environment by capitalism which, true to its logical development towards absolute domination, can (and now must) refashion the totality of space into its own peculiar decor” (Guy Debord, 1994 p. 50)

Barcelona’s decisions on urbanism over the last twenty years have been directed from the outside for the outside; the tourists, the business investments, the official/institutionalised culture, the football, the hipsters, etc., forcing to the margins all those people who do not agree/want or cannot keep up with their view of the “perfect” model of city.<sup>18,19</sup> Meanwhile, those excluded remain invisible, as do the conflicts and struggles against the official facade of the city. At the margins stay those alienated, the evicted, the recyclers of food and scrap, the immigrants, the elderly without resources, the sex workers, the punks, the anarchist, the Trotskyists, the LGBT+ groups, the feminists, the squatters, the anti-nazi collectives, the neighbours’ assemblies, the consumers associations, the environmentalist, etc.<sup>20</sup> All of these who constitute the grounding skeleton of the city - all these are only to be seen occasionally from the top of the tourist-bus when passing by. Sometimes, if the tourists are lucky, the bus might stop at a streetlight in Plaça de Sants (Saints’ Square) and witness a neighbours’ assembly, then the “magic” occurs; we look at them and they look at us with the same strangeness of what for both is, I imagine, as being on a safari trip. Beyond what could be these bizarrely exotic images, one only needs to scratch the surface in order to encounter the “others’ cities” which lives proudly in between its layers.

This chapter attempts to present the coats of Barcelona by introducing the social and political context in which the fieldwork narrative takes place. As

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<sup>18</sup>According Indecat (Statistic Institute of Catalonia), the population of Barcelona metropolitan area, in 2013, was 1,619,839 inhabitants (Statistic department of Barcelona government (<http://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/catala/dades/guiadt03/pob03/t2.htm>), from which 183,700 live in Sants-Montjuïc district where this research develops.

<sup>19</sup> At the moment of writing this and, since the autonomic elections of 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2015, Barcelona is under the government of a newly created left-wing “municipal” party, *Barcelona en Comú*, which has been presumably created from grassroots movements such as the PAH. Although, there has not been enough time to evaluate what sort of social repercussions its policies will have for the city and its inhabitants, at least in terms of urbanists there have already been several demonstrations and protest against their housing policy.

<sup>20</sup>Obviously, the non-western ones since mainstream discourses have decided to give to western immigrants the status of expats.

explained in chapter IV, I aim to construct through my own experience as activist-researcher, the cartography of Barcelona resistances; however, this analysis cannot be separated from explaining the city's urbanism.<sup>21</sup> I do not seek to exhaust all the possible outcomes and interpretations of the city within this chapter, but to explain how urbanism is linked to the birth of resistance collectives, who, as in Deleuze and Guattari "abstract machine" (2004), work together despite their different objectives, claims and affinities in order to reclaim their space and the city in the sense as it was defended by Lefebvre (2000). Hence, I analyse how those resistances take the lead and discuss the city they want by following ideas of autonomy and self-management that go beyond institutions, academic analysis or the media attention.

This argument does not only look at the forms that these resistances take but also to the rhizomatic relations and nomadic movement that brings them together creating new spaces by conforming assemblages where the micropolitics collective resistances are possible. In order to comprehend the nuances of this argument, I start by presenting a general view of Barcelona, which will be continued and completed in subsequent chapters regarding Can Batlló. Here, I will briefly analyse the development of the different urban models of Barcelona, which frame the social, political and economic context of this fieldwork. This is partially explained and analysed by its protagonists, through a two days' workshop that took place between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2014. The second part of this chapter presents the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc and its relationship with CB. Likewise, I support my argument with other materials, authors and works that prove and expand the discussion points that took place during the aforementioned workshop. Much of the data for this chapter has been produced by the collectives themselves. In so doing, they construct and reflect about their own narrative of the city while maintaining their commitment to social actions, very much as the SI read their drifts of the city (Sadler, 1999 p. 92-94).

### **Tracing Barcelona's urbanism**

One can trace the history of Barcelona by looking at its different urbanism planning and its contestations. Thus, I would like here to take a glance at these

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<sup>21</sup> Following Foucault, resistance is here understood as non-discursive subjugated knowledge capable of challenging the hegemonic episteme; this is the *insurrection of subjugated knowledges* (Foucault, 2003 p.18).

developments in order to understand the city. There are many types of cities according to different authors: the real, which is composed of the territorial morphology and its blocks of cement, the official and administrative city, and the ideal city, which remains in people's imaginary, the one we feel we belong to and which becomes part of our identity, the one each of us perceives differently and is recipient of people's culture and history (Borja, 2003 p. 36). However, the city also contains different dimensions: the classic dimension, the one resulting from the industrialisation process, and the current situation, which some have named the society of the information (ibid, p. 40 - 43). However, this last dimension, I argue, is a very neutral interpretation of the city and therefore it does not correspond with what is going on the ground. Society of the information does not tell much else about the type of city since it does not grasp the deviations and nuances which definitely influence the city's character. Therefore, in this case, I would think Debord's idea of society (city) of the Spectacle (2010) where information (or disinformation) society is contained and consumed continues to be very relevant. Others, as Borja points out, distinguish between urban and non-urban cities (Castells, 2012) or those cities where complex systems of production take place and those where they do not (Sassen, 2003). Although coming from different perspectives, these views include the city within what they refer to as the "global city" (Borja, 2003 p. 44) henceforth, having taken into account the intangible dimensions of it and referring to services as well as technological networks.

However, I argue, the city is all of them and none, composed of multi-layered substrates; ones that might be seen more clearly, others not. Most cities combine globalised and regionalised characteristics focused on intangible aspects of the global city as well as very physical and local ones, such as social relations (Ibid). In any case, they may be sensed by each individual differently and in a different way each time. Precisely the rhizomatic movement across those unperceived elements between the global and the local aspects of the city constitute the passages that allow us to dive and pass in between the layers, dimensions, and urbanism types of the multiple (an)organic city, henceforth, keeping them alive and constantly transforming them into new ones. Deleuze's idea of difference and repetition explained in chapter III embodies this interpretation of the city in transit in the sense that the passing from one dimension/interpretation to another implies what differs is able to transfer and

become not the same, but a new dimension which is multiple.

The view of the city through these invisible relations between its different conceptual stages is also approached by Lefebvre. Lefebvre (1991a, 1991b, 2000) himself was no stranger to the theory of difference, the psycho-geography of SI as well as the work of contemporary authors and social movements from whom he drew some of his approaches. He distinguishes between the city and the urban. The first refers to the physical, territorial dimensions, distribution and formal aspects of the city, while the second pays attention to the social, virtual and bios aspects which he includes within his concept of urbanism. Urbanism can happen within the city but not necessarily only there, since its basic elements can be found anywhere. Hence, this section focuses on presenting the aspects of social urbanism which form the city of Barcelona as a body which actively struggles to reconquer the rights of its use. As in Lefebvre's words:

"The city historically constructed is no longer lived and is no longer understood practically. It is only an object of cultural consumption for tourists, for aestheticism, avid of spectacles and picturesque. Even for those who seek to understand it with warmth, it is gone. Yet the urban remains in a state of dispersed and alienated actuality, as kernel and virtuality. What the eyes and analyses perceive on the ground can at best pass for shadow of a future object in the light of a rising sun. It is impossible to envisage the reconstruction of the old city, only the construction of a new one on new foundations, on another scale, in other conditions, in another society." (Lefebvre, 2000 p. 148)

In fact, being faithful to the conducted fieldwork, when referring to the city, Lefebvre's (Ibid) work regarding the right to the city was mostly mentioned. Thus, this chapter presents how those "new foundations, on another scale, on other conditions, in another society" are being constructed on the ground. In summary, how resistance collectives take charge of the city's transformation.

Nevertheless, Barcelona's urbanism breaking point can be traced back to the XVIII century with the introduction of the textile industrialisation. Until this point Barcelona's economy was based, as in many other cities in Europe, on agriculture production. Additionally, the city itself was surrounded by medieval walls which, due to population growth, were a focus of insalubrity and oppression.



However, by the XIX century with the growth of the industry, there was a need for the upcoming bourgeois to construct better communications with the harbour (the raw materials had to be imported) and the surrounding towns. This provided the city's economic power with the opportunity to transform the city's physiognomy at will.

This initial transformation came from the hand of the urban engineer, Ildefons Cerdà (1815 - 1876), who, drawing from utopic socialism saw Barcelona's urbanism as a "science of territorial order and structure" (Dalmau and Miró, 2013 p. 32). His ideal plan (known as Pla Cerdà) was to create a more rational and functional urbanism and to construct a new urban language. This was only partially implemented in the construction and reform of the Eixample (expansion); a set of streets, blocks of buildings and avenues aimed at expanding Barcelona beyond the city walls and communicating with the surrounding towns. Cerdà's idea was not fully executed because of the already very present speculation and opposition of landowners' (ibid). Nevertheless, his urbanism project and visions remain in Barcelona's urban imaginary and symbolism to the present day. Yet, the aforementioned plan, together with the demolition of the city walls, gave birth to the modern Barcelona, transforming what previously were independent towns into neighbourhoods as we know them today (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. Map of Barcelona districts which correspond with former towns (Ajuntament de Barcelona, mapa guia de Barris, n.d.). In red the Neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc.

The sense of community of these former towns and now neighbourhoods remains key not only in Barcelona's urban interpretation but, more importantly, in the construction of the city's collective resistance networks and its way of life. In fact, those cannot be separated; (urban) collective resistance as for Lefebvre's concept of heterotopia delimitates boundaries between social spaces where "difference is not only possible but necessary" (Harvey, 2013 p. 15). However, this is not a conscious difference, it can only be sensed. It is part of people's practices and art of living, and thus it is revolutionary (ibid) as per in its

transformative sense. To this point, Lefebvre's heterotopia resembles this of Foucault, as both speak of the other space. However, as Harvey's (ibid) points out, Lefebvre's concept is in direct opposition to that of Foucault, which has been criticised for being too general and ambiguous (Johnson, 2006). While Lefebvre's analyses the heterotopic space as some dialectical relations towards a positive utopia, Foucault's concept focuses on the rupture with representation, a passage from one space to the other, not as a contradictory space but as a condition to possibility, in the same sense as he understands power (ibid).

In this case, heterotopia is born where difference liberates itself from identity and becomes something else, even if only is for a split of a second. Heterotopia is then the raised ground (space) of difference and not a space-time condition to be filled up with things. It constitutes the rupture in itself, which later on can become resistance or a continuation of established power relations. Heterotopia exists at the point of rupture between a city's dimensions. According to this interpretation, I refer to heterotopia as a non-tangible spatial field which, far from being empty, contains all possibilities preceding any experienced social space and, more concretely, any resistance space. Thus, linking the ontological argument with the epistemological shift proposed in previous chapters, heterotopia refers to Deleuze's plane of immanence which links the transcendental.

### *Barcelona, between Disneyland and the Matrix*

Following with the analysis of the context of Barcelona's resistance movements, it requires to continue speaking about the speculation that has transformed and affected (and still does) the lives of the city's inhabitants. Therefore, I present here the last days of my fieldwork, which took place during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of April of 2014 (see annexe 2). I participated in a workshop organised by different collectives whose activities are directed to the social transformation from within their local area and the city. Throughout these last days, collectives around Barcelona gathered in Can Batlló to discuss the city they want to have and how to cooperate. The reason for introducing the last phase of the fieldwork here is not only a coincidence of timing as my fieldwork formally ended that same weekend, but also the fact that the discussion topic was the city. As mentioned previously in the methodology chapter, I consider that it is important to situate Barcelona's resistance within the city but also to reflect on what are the analysis

actors do of their own context and what epistemologies follows from this.

The workshop was named “Barris Cooperatius, la Ciutat Comuna” (“Cooperative Neighbourhoods, the Common City” in Barris Cooperatius, n.d.) and the main objectives were to discuss and put together common strategies of contestation against the official discourse promoted by corporations and institutions. However, a short-term aim was also to get to know each other, share experiences and construct a common cartography.

Along these lines, I summarise the discussion that took place during the afternoon of the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2014 following on the topics and arguments exposed there. In so doing, I do not only provide an example of how collectives organise and coordinate among common discussion topics but also how by these practices they reflect together, share and produce knowledge. The discussion was focused on analysing the current institutional model of Barcelona. It was attended by around 70-80 people belonging to different collectives and neighbours from other parts of the city.

The first part was named “Contra la Barcelona del diner” (Against the Barcelona of the Money) and was presented by people from the *Observatori Metropolità de Barcelona* (Barcelona Metropolitan Observatory).<sup>22</sup> It consisted mostly of a presentation followed by a discussion. The presentation traced back the genealogy of Barcelona’s urban models going as far as the 1980s when the main concern of the institutions was promoting the city internationally. It followed with the 1992 Olympic Games Model when the city underwent a major transformation regarding urbanism. This period is usually taken as the starting point of Barcelona’s capitalisation (Fieldwork notes, Barcelona 04/04/ 2014). Between the 1980s and 1990s, the remodelling of the city known as “the strategy of the public spaces”, which aimed to create new public areas, became an excuse to demolish buildings and zones which were considered “ill”. This is known as urban acupuncture method (Hernández and Tutor, 2015 p.59). Most of those areas were located within the poorest and socially alienated neighbourhoods of Barcelona, such as those within Ciutat Vella (Old City) as El Raval or Santa Caterina (Ibid). It should not be surprising to the reader if I mention that Ciutat Vella comprises of almost the whole historical centre of the city located more or

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<sup>22</sup> This is a research group focused on urbanism that was created in 2010. It is part of Comuns Urbans a Barcelona (Urban Commons in Barcelona), an aggrupation of collectives dedicated to providing urban alternatives to those of private and public institutions.

less at the centre; think in comparison about how the Latin Quarter in Paris has been transformed into a tourist attraction, the rest is self-explanatory.

The discussion continued by exposing one of the last models developed, the Barcelona of knowledge and creativity, based on the highly criticised doctrine of Richard Florida (2003), characterised by the promotion of highly controversial events, such as the Forum of 2004. The genealogy ended up by presenting and discussing the current “Smart City” model of today’s Barcelona. The difference between these last models compared to the previous ones was the use of a subtler legitimating discourse. In the first models, the direction of the official discourse was more or less obvious in terms of using the public space as a transforming element and ultimately, as an excuse to expropriate areas from which, via speculative stratagems, can be obtained economic benefits (Fieldwork notes, Barcelona 04/04/ 2014). Likewise, the application of certain policies, not exempt of ideological content, assured those objectives were met by getting rid of certain social classes. See for example, the case of the construction of the Olympic Village, between the late 1980 and 1990s in Poble Nou, in Sant Martí district, which involved massive expropriations. In another areas, according to data of FOCIVESA (Foment the Ciutat Vella S.A.; Ciutat Vella Promotion Corporation), a company which was exclusively created to implement those urban decisions, between 1998 and 2005 alone, 500 buildings and 4.500 houses, (that means 3.000 families) were affected (Hernández and Tutor, 2015 p.59).

The later models of Barcelona tend to include a milder discourse, putting the citizens’ “wellbeing” and security at the centre of the discourse. However, the intentions seem to be less mild. So, for example, in 2006 a law regulation named Ordinance on Measures to Promote and Guarantee Citizens Coexistence (CONV) (Ajuntament de Barcelona, Hisenda, n.d.) became effective, which sought to “encourage and ensure coexistence among citizens in public spaces of Barcelona” (Hernández and Tutor, 2015 p. 61) trying thus to promote ‘normality’ and ‘good practices’. In other words, this meant, any non-economically regulated activity on the streets (a total of 140 statements) was prohibited and subject to a fine, as was drinking (terraces obviously excluded), prostitution, street arts, begging, graffiti painting, etc. Consequently, the normative is directed to those whose do not fit within the capitalist model of society, its ‘normality’ and ‘good practices’, whatever that means (Ajuntament de Barcelona, CONV art. 8 para. 1.) The law was directed to regulate and homogenise people’s behaviours tending

to a militarisation of the urban space. Consequently, there was a progressive pressure on those living at the margins of the institutionalised normality forcing them to leave the central areas of Barcelona. At the same time, the spaces were being occupied by those living within the mentioned parameters of normality.

The second part of the debate on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April concentrated, however, on the later models of the city, putting special emphases on the analyses of the “smart city” concept and its contradictions. The title of this was “The right to the city as space of dispute” and it aimed to discuss issues within the current city model (Fieldwork notes, Barcelona 04/04/ 2014).

### **What does the Smart City consist of?**

During the discussion, different dimensions of the Smart City Model were tackled. The Smart City proposes to promote a more reflexive and participatory model of the city by giving attention to questions of ecology, ethical issues, marketing and technology. It proposes a more intelligent and efficient city where the efforts are put on the creation of agency, hence making extensive use of legitimating discourses, such as the use of the concepts of growth, sustainability, the search for international promotion and wealth generation. In fact, the city’s government created a specific agency to promote Barcelona’s brand. It is named Barcelona Growth (Barcelona Growth, n.d.), whose slogan in one of the promotional leaflets written in English, speaks for itself: “business creativity towards the world”. The same agency publishes a Smart City Tour guide (Barcelona Growth, Smart City Tour Guide, n.d.). Participants in the workshop argue these concepts tend to hijack public and social discourses coming from social movements in order to apply them to the private sphere. A clear example is how the slogan from the “The Smart Cities: change the world” seems to make a clear reference to the alter-globalisation movements’ slogan, “Another world is possible”. The Smart City Expo web page (Smart City World Congress, n.d.) which takes place in November every year, helps to get an idea. For a start, the images are accompanied by slogans, such as “citizens changing cities” and “cities for citizens” while the simple visitor price is of 100€ for 3 days in a country where the minimum salary is of 655,22 € (Ministerio de Trabajo y Empleo, Ministry of Labor Employment and Social Security, n.d.). Additionally, the major contributors or partners are big corporations, such as Siemens, Microsoft, Telefónica and others whose compromise with the ethical and sustainable production of technology is

arguable.

Previous slogans, such “Barcelona get pretty” (Borja, 2003 p. 78) – let’s obviate here about the sexualisation of the city as a woman a marketing tool – “Barcelona, the best shop in the world” (clear invitation to consumer society) or “Barcelona inspire” are well known to the citizens. Be beautiful, consume and be creative, together with the current be smart, seems to be, reading between the lines, what an “exemplary” citizen needs to follow. Borja (Ibid) adds the marketisation of the city as another of the strategies used by converting citizens into actors responsible for the city’s change.

One of the participants, a member of Can Masdeu (squatted house in the suburbs, between the city and a natural park) (Can Masdeu, n.d.) provided an example of how institutions co-opt social actor’s knowledge. He refers to a project the city government initiated named “Les portes de Collserola” (“the doors of Collserola”), a natural park in the outskirts of Barcelona where Can Masdeu is situated (Ajuntament de Barcelona, Les Portes de Collserola, n.d.). The project consisted of connecting the city with the natural park and divided the park into 16 zones. An open competition for this project was launched; Can Masdeu, Raons Publiques (Raons Publiques, n.d.) and LaCol (LaCol, n.d.) collaborated to win the project. The last two are architects’ cooperatives, being LaCol, some of whose members (also participate in CB, based in Sants. Although this project won, it was never executed; the ideas and theories developed there, however, were taken and implemented by the city government in other urban projects with less participative objectives. I have confirmed this case in an interview with one of the members of LaCol. The general interpretation from the collectives is that there is a strategy which consists of using their ideas about how to do an urban project in a more ethically committed and participatory way. In doing so, public institutions do not only co-opt resistance movements’ knowledge but also test the possible social opposition they might get in case the project is implemented without consensus.

Other dimensions of the “smart city” model related to the strategies and mechanisms it focusses, for example, on the promotion of tourism as a monoculture, with 7.874.941 overnights stays during 2014 (Statistical yearbook of Barcelona city, 2017). Part of the strategy is to use tourism and public space as an excuse to pacify areas of the city centre, what has been known as natural surveillance. Thus, between 2012 and 2014 there has been an increase of 38%

of licences for bar terraces from 2.690 to 4.574 (Hernández and Tutor, 2015 p. 64). Hernández and Tutor highlight how this process has been taking place during the government of the right-wing party in Barcelona. These authors also considered the increase in table allocations, chairs and surfaces of those terraces occupied and compared this with the decrease of public benches, making a clear point regarding the privatisation of the public space.

As well as using tourism as an economic resource, the smart city heavily promotes branding and campaigning for technology-based events too. About 60 events took place in Barcelona's Fair during 2014 alone (Ajuntament de Barcelona, Statistical Yearbook of Barcelona city, Economic Activity, Characteristics and surface of the salons held at Barcelona Fair, 2016). Among those was the Mobile World Congress (Mobile World Congress, n.d.) Barcelona Meeting Point (state agency fair) (Barcelona Meeting Point, n.d.) and Smart City World Congress (Smart City World Congress, n.d.).

Likewise, changes to the physical aspects of the city, such as the development of the Poble Nou district, are another consequence of the city being marketed internationally. In order to attract international business investment, a massive business area was developed. It is known as "@district", the Agbar tower (Torre Agbar, n.d.) being its most representative symbol.<sup>23</sup> All this is accomplished thanks to the complicity of the institutions by de-regulating the legal conditions applied to urban land, reducing taxes, and attracting individual entrepreneurship.

During the discussion some agencies, private names and companies were mentioned as responsible for the transformation of Barcelona urbanism. There are three principle examples that can be mentioned: Barcelona Global (agency composed of the biggest companies in Catalonia and Barcelona) (Barcelona Global, n.d.), Barcelona Growth (local government agency that protects Barcelona branding) (Ajuntament de Barcelona, Barcelona Growth, n.d.) and Barcelona Turisme (Tourism of Barcelona, Barcelona Turisme, n.d.) The question seems obvious then, who is the smart city for? Citizens, who, according to the model views on governance, are supposed to be at the core of the Smart

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<sup>23</sup> The Agbar tower is a massive glass building of business offices supposedly inspired in Montserrat Mountains and the light of geysers. According to official webpage it is meant to be constructed under sustainability criteria. It belongs to the Agbar group. However, according the recent news it has been sold to Hyatt and transformed in a luxurious hotel expecting to attract 1,5 million visitors per year (Álvarez, La Vanguardia, 16/11/13).



City, legitimating its discourse, are clearly not the ones benefiting from it, instead big national and international companies and corporations do, but this point will be discussed in the next section.

*What are the consequences for the citizens?*

In addition to the strategies presented above, the Smart City concept is also adorned with empty discourses regarding ecology, sustainability, ethics and citizen's participation which, as explained further, do not represent a real change (with respect to previous city's models) for the reality of Barcelona inhabitants. While it is true that some of the eco-initiatives, such as the construction of the bike line, have been an improvement, there are very mild profits in comparison with the costs that the implementation of other aspects of this model has imposed. The most immediate consequence is that citizens are mostly seen as objects with consumer capacities.<sup>24</sup> They are then treated as clients, as users, according to their abilities to consume the product of the new no-spaces that the Smart City creates for them. I use the term no-spaces to refer to those events, business or tourist areas, for example, which only contain temporary human relationships directly related with what the space was created for, such as the Fair or the Forum space. These spaces disperse, disaggregate, fracture and alienate citizens, as they have no desire to be inclusive (Jordi Borja, 2000; 2003). As expressed by the slogans mentioned above, one is only integrated into the city as long as it fits into these models of beauty, consumption, creativity and smartness.

Along with the privatisation and occupation of public spheres comes an increasing process of gentrification. Citizens need to move to other areas because their rents have become unpayable. Occasionally, as reflected in a recent documentary, "Bye Bye Barcelona" (Bye Bye Barcelona, n.d.), the centre is overcrowded with tourism, which pushes many of its local inhabitants to the edges of the city or other surrounding towns where the price for the square meter is lower. This is not only about finding cheaper houses but stealing the neighbours from their way of living, separating neighbours, friends and their common history of those have been sharing it to that point.

Nevertheless, especially in those areas affected by tourism, there have

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<sup>24</sup> Please note that the term "citizens" is a controversial since it excludes those marginalised by the law or the economic systems. However, it is obvious that the concepts managed by the smart city model have no intention to include those on the margins.

been various attempts to recover the space. One can go back to 2002 when the neighbours of Barri Gòtic (Gothic quarter, it belongs to the district of Ciutat Vella, and is the oldest and historic quarter of Barcelona) together with the neighbourhood association organised what they named Cruïlles (which in Catalan refers to the crossing of paths) meetings. With the slogan “Veí és qui s’aveïna” (“neighbour is the one that en-neighbours”) they started to meet once a week in the square behind Plaça Reial (Royal square, one of the most famous squares in the city) in order to share stories, prepare tea dances and other symbolic festivities. The meetings were open to everybody and generated spontaneous encounters with anybody who was willing to stop when passing by. Other examples are the ones organised by the Xarxa Veïnal de Ciutat Vella (Neighbourhood network of Ciutat Vella) named Fem Plaça (building square). The aim is to protest against the speculation and the Civic Bylaw of 2003 which stigmatised people’s conduct and behaviours. They are organised with the group of Putas Indignadas (Indignant Prostitutes) also. Their actions consist of sporadically occupying, for a brief period, different squares of the district and organising games, performances and other activities with the intention of creating awareness regarding privatisation of the public space.

Another neighbourhood which has been very much active is the neighbourhood association of Barceloneta (situated on the maritime quarter). The actions in this area can be traced back to 1971 and have moved along the opposition to the different urban plans. However, in 2005, due to the political cronyism of the previous one, a new association was created which started to collaborate with the members of one of the squatted houses (2004), the collective Miles de Vivendas (Thousands of Housing). Some of the members of this squatted house will later found V de Vivienda, which is the mother organisation of PAH (Makhlouf de la Garza, 2015 p. 153 -166). By providing these examples of other types of neighbours’ contestation, I aim to prove the richness and complexity of resistances, interactions and relationships that take place along with the urban transformation of the city.

It is also interesting to mention the shift in governance accompanying the Smart City doctrines. According to these, institutions should “support” the creation of citizens’ participatory spaces. On the one hand, the ideal city, according to the Smart Cities gurus, should favour this type of governance in many cases only based on the encouragement to use technological resources,

the increase of apps and data management technologies. On the other hand, the government is attacking (with police enforced evictions) some spaces of resistance but not others (usually those that hold a strong social support).<sup>25</sup> During the debates of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2014, some voices expressed their suspicion regarding the “permissibility” with some of the resistance oasis, such as Can Batlló for example, and mentioned the city government intentions of creating some “reservoir” of knowledge, where critical citizens are kept from directly challenging the government at the same time as maintaining an experimental space where knowledge-practices could benefit the institutions. Thus, this participation rhetoric will be allowed as long as those spaces remain under a relative institutional control.

As a participant, I argue those April debates presented an image of the city which is reminiscent of Guy Debord’s “Society of the Spectacle” (1994), but also on “Disneyland society” as it was referred to by Jean Baudrillard in “Simulacra and Simulation” (1995). The workshop of the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2014 analysed the simulacra, within its own spectacle while the day after, as I will explain further, celebrated the in-betweens, its passages, which most of the time are opposed and challenge the official face of Barcelona’s urbanism presented in this section. As the title of this section indicates, Barcelona has become an

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<sup>25</sup> However, during the last few years and since I started this research, and despite the government change, people keep on being evicted from their homes, one of the last being La Carboneria and el Banc Expropiat. I do not distinguish here between citizens who are evicted from their privately-owned houses and those who for political or economic reasons decide to occupy and live in empty houses. The reason I mention this is because the new government of the city has its background on the anti-evictions platform la PAH mentioned already in this dissertation. Despite defending the right for housing also via squatting methods, the current city government does not lift a single finger when those evicted are part of an occupied social centre, despite these being also their homes too. In these cases, it is presumed that the government makes a concession to its more conservative allies in government. Thus, nothing really changes and even police brutality continues with impunity. For example, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2016, the police evicted the people of the Banc Expropiat (Expropriated Banc) (Celma, Setmanari La Directa, 31/05/16) situated in the popular neighbourhood of Gràcia, which got the name because it used to be an empty Banc belonging to Caixa Catalunya (a Banc bankrupted at the beginning of the crises and rescued with public money). It is worth mentioning that Gràcia is one of the neighbourhoods in Barcelona vastly affected by property speculation, uncontrolled tourism and gentrification. The Banc Expropiat acted as a social centre perfectly integrated in the neighbourhood where a multitude of cultural events took place. It was supposed to be expropriated two years ago, coinciding with the riots regarding the eviction of Can Vies, the reason for which the previous government decided not to proceed and pay the rent 65.000€ (rent paid against the will of the tenants) to the new owner who bought the space at a lower market price with vulture funds. The new government of Barcelona en Comú stopped paying the rent in January 2016. A week of rioting took place where police acted as usual with violence against anybody that passed nearby. The mayor from Barcelona and former leader of PAH has remained fairly silent and neutral, defending the institutional operation and claiming that the property is in private hands. These events have been a low blow for Ada Colau’s city government since it has affected the already weak support it had among activists and collectives in Barcelona.

amusement park, similar to many other cities such as Prague, Paris or Amsterdam, an extension of Disneyland, (using Baudrillard terminology), which tends, or perhaps already is, to hyperreality (ibid). Similarly, the tendency to introduce dehumanising technologies so highly promoted by the Smart City doctrines seems to push society to another level of simulacra, “The Matrix” metaphor. Henceforth, the only thing that is left in order to be part of the city is our capability to consume the spectacle (Debord, 1994).

### **Is there a common city?**

The first day of April’s debates ended with general discussions and reflection on what are the institutions’ strategies behind the Smart City model and how it affects citizens. The second day tried to expand on the city that we want to have, how to reach this goal and how to cooperate between the different collectives. The title was “how to create a cooperative neighbourhood.” For the first part of the day, a few well-established collectives presented their projects, processes and shared their experience. Among them was Anteu 9 Barris (Anteneu 9 Barris, n.d.) a socio-cultural centre situated on the outskirts of Barcelona self-managed by the community.<sup>26</sup> The project understands culture as a right of people, and it exists since 1977. The second collective was La Base (La Base, n.d.) situated in Poble Sec (a neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuic). This was only inaugurated in 2014. It is also self-managed but with the difference that their space was not occupied but bought by over 100 members. They claim to have been inspired by the workers’ cooperatives of Sants that took place from 1870 – 1939 (Dalmau and Miró, 2013). They collaborate with the other projects existing around this area becoming, occasionally, as a hub for other projects and collectives in the area. Their political statement has been very well discussed prior to its constitution. In fact, during the whole weekend, the intervention of the members highlighted the need of putting life at the centre of the political struggle.

The last presentation came from the hand of La Ciutat Invisible (The Invisible City, La Ciutat Invisible, n.d.). This is a cooperative founded in 2005 and focuses on editing and selling books as well as promoting cooperative culture and producing research materials regarding social movements. They actively

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<sup>26</sup>Ateneu refers to a type of association peculiar to the Catalan culture. The principal characteristic of this type of association is the requirement of participation in the organisation of activities. The first Ateneu created was the Anteneu Barcelonès (initially named Anteneu Català) in 1860.

speak about imagining and dreaming the idea of the city they would like to have and making it real. They believe in building structures from below “through mechanisms of self-representation and horizontality which provide an alternative to the capitalist society” (interviewee La Ciutat Invisible, Barcelona, 17/10/2014). He also focused on the project CB highlighting the number of possibilities that it condenses; first, because of the size and symbolism of the space; second, because of the strategic position since CB is situated contiguously to at least four other neighbourhoods.

The presentations were wrapped up by the intervention of other groups, such as Flor de Maig (May Flower) (Flor de Maig, n.d.) which is situated in Poble Nou and used to be an old consumer’s cooperative, created in 1890. The building was occupied in October 2012 using a count-down method emulating the one used by CB. On March 2014 the city government ceded the building to the neighbours’ management. Other interventions were the ones of Can Masdeu and the Recreant Cruïlles (recovering crossroads) (Recreant Cruïlles, n.d.), which is situated in one of busiest and less politicised areas of Barcelona, L’Eixample which was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter and unites the old with the new city. They aim to recover the space that occupied Germanetes dels Pobres (Sisters of the Poor), an old cluster demolished in 2004 and from which only the empty site was left.

After these presentations, we were organised into groups (my group consisted about 15 people) in order to discuss the main concepts about how to cooperate. The main ideas revolved around the following: collectivisation, self-management of resources, inclusion of others regardless of the different political ideologies, creations of network, attention to care and governance, necessary shift of traditionally understood activism by putting life at the centre, how to modify the way we relate to each other, create awareness on everyday politics as activists, territorialisation of struggles (as being situated), accepting own contradictions, balance of material, political and social dimensions, occupations as a strategy, etc.

The final group I participated with was composed by members of Memetro which is a collective that creates awareness regarding public transport prices, they defined themselves in a humoristic way as a research project (Memetro, n.d.), people from the consumer cooperatives in Poble Nou, someone from the Metropolitan Observatory, someone from Telefon Roig (Telefon Roig, n.d.) a

neighbour of Sants that participated with the arts project in CB. It also participated people coming from Gràcia working in a job integration project in Poble Nou and Barceloneta, someone who currently lives in an eco-community in Mount Blanc and was interested in the discussion, etc.<sup>27</sup>

From all these discussions there are several points, concepts and reflections that I would like to highlight as relevant since they represent a different view of how activism is usually perceived and which I understand are in direct opposition of traditional analyses. I divide all these reflections into several lines of working strategies: a. capitalism oppression coming from outside to the inside, focusing on the biopolitics of power; b. from the inside towards the inside, looking at the idea of autonomy and self-management between individuals toward subject transformation where mechanism of care and inclusion are emphasised and between collectives putting the attention on the creation of networks for social transformation as a result of these mechanism and; c. from the inside toward the outside, building up strategies to fight against the smart city, capitalism and new governance tendency.

Thus, as I mentioned before, putting “life at the centre of the struggle” (workshop member of La Base, Barcelona, 05/04/2014) was one of the biggest arguments. Many members of La Base emphasised this point during the whole weekend but also brought attention to the concept of care (in Catalan *cura*) bringing in relation feminist ethics and the type of activism being defended here. The need for resistance collectives to take into account basic necessities at all levels, social, political, economic and psychological, was highlighted at the same time that the necessity of shifting activist views towards a more inclusive perspective in order to become a real alternative was being recognised. Consequently, the humanisation of these alternatives implies the embodiment of the struggle and thus the body becomes political.

At the same time, collective resistance groups are aware of a shift in government’s strategy towards those resistances that have gained strong support from society. The question of governance came across in many of the discussions, being understood as a suspicious concept which should be kept under the loop. Finally, it is important to highlight that, although the title of the

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<sup>27</sup> Her experience was really interesting since she lives in front of CB she has seen the building from the balcony since her childhood. She followed the process and one day she decided to come down and participate. This applies to many neighbours who, like her, decide to make the steps from users to active participants.

discussion was about how to cooperate, the concept of cooperative was discussed as it referred to a particular form of management as well as an articulation of perspectives. Cooperatives and the anarchism tradition are very strong in Barcelona, and sometimes it feels slightly idealised as the only structure capable of opposing capitalism. However, the use of the word cooperative is on many occasions just a designation since people are aware of the transformation and many forms which this concept can take. To start a discussion about how cooperative is understood would be too broad a debate for which there is not space in this dissertation.

In this section some examples of resistance collectives are mentioned, as well as how those perceive themselves; however, talking from within, being a Barcelona citizen (since August 2013) one finds a very critical Barcelona, that of the everyday struggles against those that supposedly are representing us. I have presented how Barcelona fluctuates from the representation of more pessimistic theories towards others closer to those of the SI, poststructuralist and “minor authors” (Deleuze, Guattari and Brinkley, 1983) approaches, developed on the ground of collective action and resistance movements who, following Henri Lefebvre’s concept, also demand their “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1991). Therefore, I argue that the debates I have presented along this line, prove not only the capacity for resistance collectives and activists, as well as of common citizens to manage and produce their own knowledge but also highlight their will, self-reflection capacities and awareness in reclaiming their right to the public space. Likewise, they demonstrate how coming from different backgrounds and approaches it is possible to collaborate and create a strong network adding to the city’s urbanism another layer of complexity. Resistance collectives, as presented here, recreate a different psycho-geography of the city constructing lines of flights and passages which not only go beyond the current capitalism society ties but also rediscover the link between the different neighbourhoods wandering through the present and past of urbanism and its activism. To the question whether there is a common city, I would answer there is a common acknowledgement, one that wants to see another city and, hence, there is common space. This is a different space where people acknowledge each other and where differences are seen as an added value instead of an obstacle to constructing the common city. Thus building upon these multiple forms of resistances the city becomes an organic, self-assembled gear capable of challenging the Establishment, a social BwO.

Beyond the business development, the tourists, the increasing technologies that rule the simplest transactions, one finds the Barcelona of the neighbours. Each neighbourhood is composed of differences, complexities and citizen's collectives that are locally situated and trying to construct and transform their society from their own essences. I will complete this chapter by presenting more in depth, one of these neighbourhoods where my research has taken place, the district of Sants-Montjuïc. It is important to mention that, although I generally refer to Sants, Can Batlló as physically based in the neighbourhood of La Bordeta which belongs to the district of Sants-Montjuïc. However, referring to Sants usually implies La Bordeta and Hostafrancs which were the old centres of the district. Later on, Sants-Badal, La Font de Guatlla, La Marina del Port, La Marina del Prat Vermell and Poble Sec were added to this administrative division (see Figure 3. Ajuntament de Barcelona, n.d.).

### **Why Sants and Why Can Batlló?**

As explained in the previous chapter, I initiated the idea of this fieldwork in Sants with the intention of extending it to the rest of Barcelona's districts, aiming to build-up a cartographic work on resistance collectives. However, right at the beginning, I realised that it was going to be impossible to even explore all the complexities of Sants within a single research period, even more when realising the strategic position of Can Batlló in relation to Barcelona urbanism. Therefore, I decided that trying to map the knowledge network and struggles of Sants was going to be far more enriching and still would answer my research question. However, I still expected to find links and relations with other collectives in Barcelona.

Beyond providing a detailed account of all resistance collectives in Barcelona or Sants, this section aims to explain the processes, actions and collectives from which I have learned while conducting this research. This builds up to an incomplete genealogy of the neighbourhood of Sants – La Bordeta, but enough to illustrate the path that leads to answering the research question presented in this dissertation. I argue that in order to analyse current urban (social) resistance on the ground, it is not enough to follow majoritarian theories such as RMT, structuralist and rationalist or approaches as well as interpretations based on the universality of the concept of identity whose ontology is founded on an a priori representation of objects of study, as has been presented in Chapter II and III, but to see them as producers of their own analyses in the sense



presented by the feminisms of chapter IV. Current resistance collectives construct their decisions beyond the homogenisation of pre-established patterns of behaviour, cost-benefit analyses, and categorisations of identity imposed upon them by the heterodoxy of academia, but they construct and transform while doing. Experimentation, horizontality, heterogeneity and self-reflection are concepts commonly accepted and verbalised. Thus, theories that have roots within ideas of movement complexity and change inherited from previous movements and overlapping struggles, are the ones that I have seen mostly represented during my fieldwork. Consequently, this section presents the complexity of the neighbourhood of Sants, focusing on its history of struggle to its most recent accomplishment, the context of Can Batlló occupation, from which I will expand to the next chapter.

In his book regarding the cooperatives of Sants, the members of *La Ciutat Invisible*, Dalmau and Miró (2013), follow Lefebvre's concept regarding the constructions of social spaces, referring to the neighbourhoods of Barcelona as "those places that cut the metropolitan space-time dividing the city". Hence, they become a mediation space between the private sphere and the public one, the alienating city. It is a space characterised by the result of urban transformations but also the actions, relations, experiences and practices of its inhabitants; it is the container of multiple forms of life, differences, subjectivities, symbolism and potentialities. Henceforth, it is also a political entity in constant movement and revolution (Dalmau and Miró, 2013 p.27- 28).

When researching the significant struggles that have influenced Can Batlló and helped to construct Sants collective imaginary, several periods are mostly highlighted (among many others). Firstly, it is necessary to take into account Sants cooperatives' history, which can be traced back as far as the worker cooperatives experiences between 1870 and 1936 (ibid). These are considered as examples of successful autonomous management which remained until the end of the civil war in 1939. Secondly, as I will explain further in this chapter, it is necessary to highlight the struggle that the neighbour's association of La Bordeta and the Industrial Association of Can Batlló (formed in 1999) have carried on since 1976 when the metropolitan urban planning was implemented. This designated CB and its surrounding area as public equipment and green areas, condemning business and some neighbours to be evicted. And thirdly, I highlight here the different struggles that took place during the 1990s onwards. This period

was characterised by the collectivisation of the struggles reflected in the different ways in which collectives and associations collaborated together independently of their background. Although this collaboration was also present before, such as in the case of the cooperatives between 1870 and 1939 and the struggle against the eviction predicted by the metropolitan urban plan of 1976, it is under the umbrella of the social movements of the 1990s that Can Batlló's reclaiming platform starts to take form.

Between the 1990s and 2000s, according to the book published by the Assembly of Sants' Neighbourhood in 2008, there was an increase of resistances and practices which constitute in many occasions the base for today's resistances technologies and knowledge. It manifested with the creation of autonomous movements, such as the birth of squatted houses and social centres, the Hamsa (1996- 2004), Can Vies (1997), Casal Popular la Garnatxa (1994- 1996), etc. It was the time following the mobilisations against NATO, the support to the Zapatistas' uprising (1994) and the alter-globalisations movements. In Sants, the actions were directed against the temporal-work agencies, the formation of anti-fascist mobilisations in Plaça dels Països Catalans, against the Spanish military march in Diagonal or the World Bank, etc. All were followed by new alternative media, Info Usupa in 1996 (Info Usurpa, n.d.), La Burxa in 1998 (La Burxa, n.d.) and Setmanari La Directa since 2005 (Setmanari La Directa, n.d.)

During the 2000s collective actions and collaborations between the different collectives intensified. It was the time of mobilisations against the Iraq War (2003), the creation of the consumer cooperatives, such as Germinal, the assembly against the Fòrum of 2004, the protest against the detention centres for immigrants (Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros, CIES) which still are very active today, the creation of Sants neighbourhood website (<https://barrisants.org/>) in order to coordinate all events, campaigns such as "R.I.P. Sants" (2005), the protest against the expansion of the train station, the creation of La Ciutat Invisible, the birth in October 2005 of Negres Tempestes (anarchist and pro-independency communication collective) (Negres Tempestes, n.d.), the Espai Obert (group of collectives that work towards social transformation since 1997 and moved from Poble Sec to Sants in 2005) (Espai Obert, n.d.), the inauguration of the cooperative-restaurant of Terra d'Escudella

(December 2005), etc.<sup>28</sup> All these collectives were born in between their corresponding actions and repression strategies. Nevertheless, other important precedents for Can Batlló can be found in the history of the Espanya Industrial, an old textile mill from the XIX century reconverted thanks to the pressure of the neighbours and converted in a green area; or the Vapor Vell, another textile mill which is now a library. Similarly, the Lleialtat Santenca (Leialtat Santenca, n.d.) was also reclaimed. This used to be a workers' cooperative in 1894 and is currently being renovated and expected to locate new equipment for the neighbourhood.

These are some examples of how the history of Sants-Montjuïc urban resistances can be traced back, in some occasions, by looking at contestation to public policy regarding urban plans. Likewise, throughout the previous section, I have mentioned how during the presented workshop it was argued that CB has a strategic position within the city's urbanism since it is situated in between four neighbourhoods. CB stays in the way of one of Barcelona's urban integrations projects, the communication of the city from river to river (Borja, 2003 p. 85; Tapia, 2014) – from Llobregat to Besòs. Additionally, Can Batlló's bordering areas communicate with Gran Via, a boulevard which on the one hand connects the city with the Fair quarter and the airport, and with the business area of Glories in Poble Nou on the other.<sup>29</sup> Thus it does not only have a symbolic significance for resistance movements but also for the city general urbanism project and economic powers. Nevertheless, as I present further, CB is for resistance collectives in Barcelona more than a building since it trespasses the idea of territorial space and becomes a social space which has been retaken by the community. The three moments and movements listed above had greatly contributed to creating the current space of CB even before it was occupied. CB is the result of the history of its neighbours and a strong orchestrated network constructed during all these years of contestation. The struggle for reclaiming CB has gained symbolical meaning and articulates many of the historical and also recent claims of the

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<sup>28</sup> Named the Culture Fòrum, this event tried to “manipulate the culture of the social movements, and the mobilisations against the war, in an institutionalised frame managed by the corporations that sponsor it.” (Torvà and Miró, 2013 p. 37).

<sup>29</sup> This strategy could be compared to other cities, such as in Valencia where the right party (People's Party) planned to expand Blasco Ibañez Avenue even if to accomplish that requires expropriating and destroying an historic fisherman town, El Cabanyal. Since 1998 the platform Salvem el Cabanyal (Saving the Cabanyal, El Cabanya, n.d.) fights against the implementation of this plan which, despite several judicial decisions, was only stopped in 2014.

neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc and, more concretely, of La Bordeta.

### **Trespassing the walls of Can Batlló**

Can Batlló (Can Batlló, History, n.d.) is an industrial compound of the XIX century dedicated to textile production which has been occupied and self-managed by the neighbours of Sants-Montjuïc since 11 of June 2011. It was constructed on farmland in 1878 by Joan Batlló, a person of the Catalan bourgeois, in what is now Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes. He intended to concentrate all textile production processes in one space. It occupied 8 hectares, 20% of La Bordeta. Figure 4. shows how Can Batlló is situated right in the neighbourhood occupying a very important space hence its historical influence cannot be overseen. CB socio-political history is rooted with that of its neighbours and for this reason, this case study goes beyond the arguments of analysing an event as I have stated in chapter II.



Figure 4. Picture extracted from Cab Batlló web page

Since its beginnings, Can Batlló was “like a small village” within the city, with streets, a chaplain, and sports areas, as well as its own electric power plant (Giriat, 2013 p. 44). In 1892 Joan Batlló died and his nephews took over the management of the factory, which became named Nephews of Joan Batlló SA (1926). During Franco’s uprising of 17<sup>th</sup> of July 1936 against the Republican government. The anarcho-syndicalism from CNT/FAI were in the Catalan Government and initiated the collectivisation of fabrics. Thus, Can Batlló went on to be managed by its workers until the occupation of Barcelona by the fascist troops in 1939. Orwell in his well-known account of the Spanish civil war in *Homage to Catalonia* mentions:

“It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flag of the Anarchists (...) Every shop and cafe had an inscription saying that it had been collectivized; even the bootblacks had been collectivized and their boxes painted red and black.” (Orwell, 2003 p.6)

Xavier Diez argues that when the factories were given back to the original owners in 1939, they found out that many of them were in better material and organisational conditions hence questioning the division of labour directly. For this reason, he continues, the prosecution and the silencing of the libertarian collective history has been vital for the subsequent political powers (Diez, 2014 p. 51). Beyond the academical debates regarding this period, I can confirm with my experience that the memory of this period of collectivisation is perceived as a success and remains in the minds of many autonomous movements today.

In 1943 it was bought by Julio Muñoz Ramonet, who made his fortune through dubious means thanks to his contacts with Franco's government. He added CB to his textile group, UNITESA (ibid, p. 52). In 1964 textile production was not giving the expected benefits and closed. Julio divided the factory into 700 premises to be rented as ateliers and other business.

In 1976, the Pla General Metropolità (General Metropolitan Plan) (PGM) reclassified CB and surroundings as an area intended for urban facilities and green areas. The Plan was never implemented; hence the long negotiation of the neighbours, which still takes place today, began. Firstly, the negotiation aimed to exclude the affected houses from being re-zoned. This was accomplished in 2002 (Soler, 2013 p. 85). Secondly it is also worth highlighting the struggle of the workers and industrials to protect their business in Can Batlló from being evicted or getting an insufficient offer to be moved to another area.<sup>30</sup> Thirdly, the claims were directed to the construction of public equipment. Some of these struggles are still negotiated while I am writing this dissertation, such as the evictions of

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<sup>30</sup> It was clear that they need bigger facilities since space they had was antiquated and lacking modern installations. However, the cost of transferring and maintaining a business in Barcelona, in terms of rent, energy resources, time, travel expenses, etc. made it very difficult to reach a dignifying agreement.

Cami de la Cadena.<sup>31</sup> The negotiation commission of CB and also of Sants neighbourhood Association (most of the time the same people are in both) has been able to scratch some serious commitments from the institutions. Some of the companies still work in CB which case has been reinforced by the occupation. And finally, the construction of equipment is still taking place; however, the initiative is not expected from the institutions anymore, but it is being directly managed, organised, decided and finally claimed from CB's assembly.

In 1986 Julio Muñoz insurance company went bankrupt. As a consequence of his debts, Julio escaped the country to Switzerland and died in 1991. All these claims were not only fought against the district government but also against the inheritors of Julio Muñoz and their various real-estate agencies which today are linked to Gaudir Group.

In 2006, the urban plan was modified by the government of Barcelona thanks to the pressure of the neighbours. However, more than 200 small companies still had to be relocated. The negotiation took place between the neighbours, the industrials of CB, the government and property registration office. Though, time passed by and the newly reached agreements seem to have fallen into an empty sac. The 2008 crisis only contributed to the list of excuses. Until 2011, with the exception of a few companies, CB remained in silence and its walls closed.

Albeit CB was claimed for over 35 years by the neighbours' association of La Bordeta, it was not until 2009 that the platform "Can Batlló és pel Barri" (Can Batlló is for the neighbours) was formally constituted, materialising this struggle in concrete actions and long-term strategies. Citizens whose aspirations for more and better public facilities fell on deaf ears decided to build up these facilities by themselves. The platform is/was composed of neighbours of La Bordeta, Sants, Badal, Hostafrancs and Font de Guatlla. One of the CB interviewees (Interviewee CB member, Barcelona, 14/04/2014) highlights that this platform is constituted with knowledge coming from previous experiences and people with different backgrounds and ages. He notes that some members of the platform had participated in previous struggles, such as those against the evictions of Can Vies

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<sup>31</sup> To explain this situation here it will be very long, but it can be said that those neighbours affected by the evictions do not have any documents of the houses since they are very old and already re-zoned since 1976. Many of the families living there currently belong to highly discriminated and excluded communities. Some of them have actively collaborated with the negotiation process in order to be relocated, others have not.

(1998 and 2000), the platform against the expansion of the train station, and the organisation of the “alternative” neighbourhood street festival, to give some examples.

Previously, as explained before, there were other experiences of cooperation within the collectives in Sants that gave birth to the idea of the Can Batlló Platform. Social movements and collectives in Sants have been organised since 1997 in L'Assemblea del Barri de Sants (ABS) (Sants Neighbours Assembly). Likewise, in June 2005 the neighbours belonging to the group “Salvem Sants tots els dies, Can Batlló, l'estació i les vies” (Save Sants every day, Can Batlló, the station and train rails) locked themselves in Sant Medir Church near Can Batlló (Miró in Assemblea de Barri de Sants 2008 p. 82; Soler, 2013 p. 86) in order to protest against urban speculation in the district.<sup>32</sup> The modification of the new PGM of 2006 was born from strategic discussions that took place during these days. However, CB's platform was also composed by other citizens with no experience of social struggle. For all these reasons, the platform determined right from the beginning a different level of cooperation characterised by the heterogeneity of its actors and not their ideological discourse. In order to coordinate the demands, the platform became rapidly organised in working commissions such as diffusion, negotiation with authorities, preparation of actions, etc. Some of these commissions remain working in parallel with the current CB project. In the next section, I present the strategy and efforts that gave rise to the community CB.

### *Can Batlló's Tic-Tac Strategy*<sup>33</sup>

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 (Marcé, 2013 p.95), in a meeting with the district, representatives of CB's platform gave those district officials two years to come up with an urban plan for CB, one that satisfied the neighbours. Otherwise, they would take the necessary steps towards the occupation. The deadline was set for June 2011, and later on was agreed to be the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011. From that moment information and negotiation strategies were directed to prepare for the moment when the doors of CB were going to be trespassed. As I have already

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<sup>32</sup> Sant Medir Church is well known for giving support for social struggles.

<sup>33</sup> Later on, this strategy has been followed for other vindications, such as the demolition of the wall that separated CB from the neighbourhood. Additionally, some other collectives, such as Flor de Maig, have adopted and modified this strategy in order to accomplish their own goals in the government.

mentioned, Sants district has coexisted during its history with numerous protests and actions happening in their streets, thus the concept of occupation and direct-action strategies are not strange to the neighbours' discourse. In fact, the idea of occupying CB, as one of the interviewees' mentioned, legitimised direct action as a valid strategy (interviewee CB member, Barcelona, 14/04/2014).

The broadcast of events towards the visualisation of the process took place on the streets through street assemblies and mouth to mouth communication, but also through other means, such as a giant count-down calendar that was placed in Plaça de la Pelleria (square right in front of CB's walls), t-shirts and balcony flags with the motto "Can Batlló és del Barri" (Can Batlló belongs to the neighbours). One of the logos indicating the long-term struggle read "35 anys de vergonya! 11 de juny entrem a Can Batlló" (35 years of shame! On 11<sup>th</sup> of June we get into Can Batlló). Other commissions took care of the collection of donated materials, such as furniture and books for the library, which would be the first equipment in CB. Figure 5. is one of the posters created to gather the neighbours on the 11th of May 2011 in an assembly in order to discuss the occupation. In it mentions that there will be some food and remains everybody there is only one month left for the occupation.



Figure 5. Poster extracted from Sant's neighbour's social centre.



Finally, on the week previous to the occupation of the warehouse number 11 (Bloc Onze), the district authorities agreed on negotiating. The negotiation commission reported back to the general assembly and it was agreed only to negotiate with all the parts involved in the conflict and the property agency; the Platform (represented by the lawyers of the neighbour's association), the district authorities (two political parties were involved), the Property Registry Agency and the state agent Gaudir Group (Grup Gaudir, n.d.) which still owns part of CB. Later on in the week, the commission met with the district authorities, and it was agreed that no commitment was going to be made unless they provided CB with a signed assignment agreement. This was provided two days before the occupation on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2011. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011, as planned, different columns of people toured Sants in a parade that finished opening the doors of CB at 12 pm. Already with the keys in hand, the neighbours celebrated their success with a popular lunch and music on the streets of CB, which has been named 11<sup>th</sup> of June Street.

#### *What are the keys of this success?*

Regarding the success of CB, as a member of the negotiation and economy commission explained during the interviews (economy commission interviewee, Barcelona, 24/03/2014), it is important to highlight several variables that might have conditioned the process. The interviewee jokingly suggests that the success of CB may be based on “a lucky alignment of the stars with the sun”, as well as a combination of many other factors. It is important to mention that since 15<sup>th</sup> of May of 2011 citizens around the country were protesting against the government cuts by occupying the squares, as mentioned in chapter II, through what has been known as 15-M movement certainly creating favourable atmosphere. Additionally, Barcelona was in the middle of a municipal election process (22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2011). After almost 30 years of government, the PSC (Catalan Socialist Party) lost the district of Sants-Montjuïc to the conservative party and the social democrats of CiU (Convergència i Unió). Coincidentally, the takeover of the new municipal mayor was on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011.

Another event which also a great influence had, was related to the violent events that occurred in Plaça Catalunya on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2011. That day the police charged violently with batons and firing rubber bullets against the people encamped in the square, which provoked immediate condemnation from the

general society, as well as by the national media (Público, 25/05/2011) and by international organisations, such as Amnesty International (Amnesty International 07/06/2011).<sup>34</sup> For all of these reasons, the institutions had to be very cautious about how to react against a movement such as the occupation of CB which had the support of many of the citizens. Then, most of the authorities decided just to look somewhere else.

One cannot just talk of today's Can Batlló success without mentioning its process and how people from heterogeneous backgrounds and ages ended up working together on this common project, which is the result of the continuous struggle of the neighbours against the oppressing powers and their need to recover a space that was very much considered theirs. Its achievement has added to the already extensive symbolism of Barcelona's history of resistance, associated with the conviction that working from their difference is possible without having to renounce to their autonomy as a subject, project or identity. This idea is very clearly expressed by Josep Marcé, one of the co-writers of the book, *Inventari de Can Batlló* (2013):

“Bloc Onze did not form a homogeneous group nor had anything to do with an affinity group or a collective, but it made from its heterogeneity – with regards to age, origin or ideological background – a hallmark.<sup>35</sup> But we should work hard for this not to be a handicap when it comes to taking decisions, specific projects or establishing an organisational model. In the future, this fact itself is the great strength of the project (...) The word self-management begins to be part of the vocabulary not only of the people directly involved in the project but also much of the neighbours, and even de media when referring to the process undertaken by a little-known neighbourhood on the periphery of Barcelona.” (Marcé, 2013 p. 102)

In a sense, this quote of Josep Mercé speaking about his experience of the occupation contains Deleuze and Guattari's words mentioned in previous chapters. That is, the occupation of Can Batlló can be considered as an event comprising multiple possibilities and founded on a heterogenous substratum of

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<sup>34</sup> In April 2014 Amnesty International published an 85-page document about the “right” to protest in Spain entitled “Spain: the right to protest under threat”.

<sup>35</sup> Referring to the first occupied warehouse.

co-functioning alliances and symbiosis, which becomes now an assemblage about to change and transforms subjectivities and culture once again.

It is for all the reasons explained here that I decided to focus on CB and describe the narrative of how this became a reality for the neighbours of Sants-Montjuïc and a reference for other collectives in Barcelona. Can Batlló has been part of the collective identity of the neighbours since its beginnings in 1880 and now it continues to be so, demonstrating how to self-construct a different model of collectivisation, interactions and practices beyond the ones imposed by capitalism and the orthodoxy of revolutionary ideologies. However, this is a complex and extensive process which I will further develop in the next chapter on the bases of projects, assemblies, workshops and events where I have participated directly.

## **Conclusion**

One can find in Barcelona many projects and experiments in relation to urbanism: those of the emblematic buildings, those of the urban philosophers (read the irony) or architect gurus that try and fail to transform and integrate the complexities of Barcelona's society using cement as a tool, the ones that seek to sexualise the city in order to sell it to the highest bidder, those who pursue the so called acupuncture urbanism which pretends to go into details and recognise "ill" points, the pre-a-porter projects, etc. (Borja, 2003 p. 73 -79). This necro-urbanism promoted by politicians, institutions and technicians has many faces but none of them is addressing the issues of its inhabitants and the exclusion which generates.

The smart city presented here pretends to make up for previous failures but, once again, from a very top-down point of view. Those that are able to enjoy the goodies on offer by such a city model are those who can pay for it, who can afford to queue and pay for every single museum, monument and musical and cultural event, live in the Borne, Gràcia or rent a tourist apartment in Airbnb, which previous tenants could not afford any more, those who move around on electric scooters, sit on the terraces, enjoy over-priced eco-meals and green-smoothies or drink one of the different 50 types of gin-tonics in any of the squares overcrowded by the latest bar trends. Barcelona is a city which communicates through smartphone applications pushing us to consume anything, anywhere, at any time.

The smart city pretends to promote a conscious and responsible urbanism but without making any real social commitment or losing a single euro. It promotes participation and ethical engagement but for who and how? As in Borges' fable regarding the map that occupied the whole empire, only the ones at the edges could see that it was a map. As it happens with the hyperreality of the city, only those at the edges can see/sense its miseries. In this chapter, I have presented the different layers of the hyperreal city, from the failure of simulacra to the new delusion, the smart city, and the matrix of Neo. It is at this extreme where simulacra is detached from its physical space and time where one can also find its flaws.

By presenting Barcelona's urbanism, I have analysed how urban resistance movements can be traced back drawing from the failures of politicians and institutions to address the problems of those who they supposedly represent. Likewise, following the different urbanistic issues presented here, I have introduced the networks, practices and actions these resistances create along and through the margins which as symbiosis relations and diagrams attempt to reclaim the city. The workshop that took place in Can Batlló on the 4th and 5th of April 2014 is one of these practices. In it more than 100 people from different backgrounds, such as cooperative movements, consumer associations, squatted movements, eco-movements, people's protesting against privatisation of public transport, neighbours' associations and social centres, or just simply neighbours, came together in order to analyse their own context, from their own perspective, in a horizontal manner and reflecting on their own methods to construct a different society.

The last part of this chapter introduces the history and the reason for focussing this research on CB. I have not only traced CB's genealogy by putting it in relation to the resistance movements of Sants-Montjuïc with Barcelona's urbanism but have also explained the interwoven lines of Sants' collectives with CB and vice versa. Additionally, I have introduced the tic-tac strategy through which CB was occupied, a well-organised process of direct action planned for almost two years which goes beyond preconceived ideas of spontaneity and surprise factors of the event. Altogether, it constitutes a complexity of flows and movements that trespass spaces and situations and create new ones. This has allowed me to map a diagram of Barcelona's resistance in order to situate the relationships that take place and which I will expand on and analyse in the next

chapters. CB constitutes the territorialisation of a multiplicity of desires trying to live hence “becoming a space of experimentation” which “will define the territory we are” (Córdoba-Mediola and Dalmau, 2013 p. 135).

## **VII. ON THE (RE)SIGNIFICATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS SPACES AND SITUATED ACTIVISM: MY PARTICIPATION IN CAN BATLLÓ**

Following the argument outlined in chapter VI, Can Batlló's has been forged as a space of difference which breaks with the 'normality' of other surrounding spaces. As mentioned, this is a XIX century building-compound in the midst of a neighbourhood of Barcelona. Moreover, since its foundation CB has been signified over and over again but has never lost its influence in the neighbourhood to the point that one can speak about CB's imaginary. This chapter pretends to unveil CB's current signification and the importance it has, not only within Barcelona's collective resistance movements but also in terms of understanding and analysing these movements. In this sense, Can Batlló constitutes an autonomous and experimental space of possibilities that goes beyond the institutionalised interpretation of traditional social movement theories, a space where difference and multiplicity in its transcendental immanence state (as explained in chapter III) constitutes a possibility where identity only exists as long as it contains its multiple interpretations and lives.

CB is considered a case of success in terms of self-management and autonomy capacity, but how has CB become a reference and how is it possible to manage such a big and heterogeneous space? I aim to provide an answer to these questions by re-calling my experience as a member of CB. In doing so, I use an autoethnographic approach aimed to present the complexity of CB's resistance methodologies through the eyes of my participation.

The first part of this chapter aims to present CB's structural compositions and how this constitutes a tangible alternative to the capitalist model of the city. Thus, I start by introducing the process of CB's participation, the projects and the main characteristics of these groups, such as their disagreements. Secondly, I analyse their internal processes and methods and the most interesting aspects of their assembly system, as well as its deficiencies. Thirdly, I have a look at how gender and sexual dissidence related issues are reflected within CB's participatory processes and discourses. Last, I take into account CB's capacity to negotiate with the institutions as one of the important points to highlight in this analysis.

This chapter presents the complexity of CB's organisation and processes

while at the same time illustrating the difficulties of dealing with its heterogeneity. I aim to explain how CB is organised without having to search for the homogenisation of ideas but by recognising that respect, trust and the inclusivity of difference are among their biggest assets. This means putting difference and social complexity at the centre as the narrative of my participation reflects on this chapter.

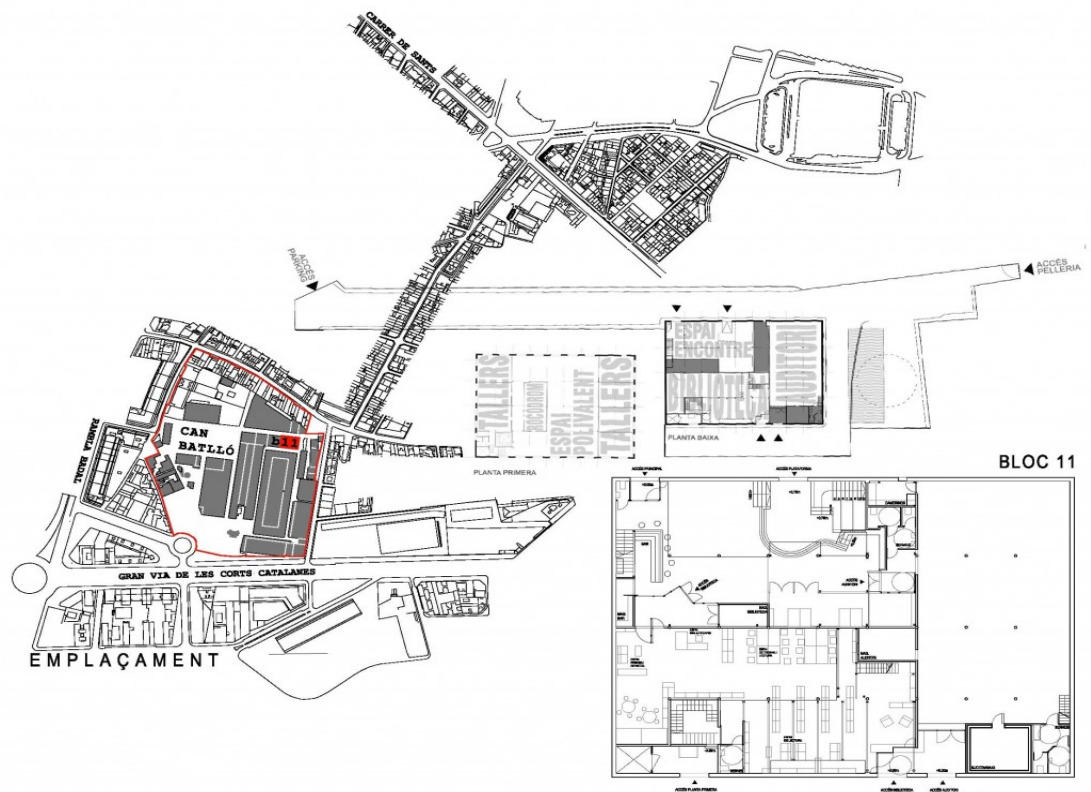
### **The challenge of making sense of Can Batlló's differences through its projects**

The occupation of CB on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2011 generated great excitement and a sense of victory. Those feelings were followed by the acknowledgement of the amount of work needed. Right after the occupation of CB, on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June, the first two general assemblies took place in Block Onze (Warehouse 11), highlighted in red in figure 4.<sup>36</sup> More than 100 people congregated at each. As an outcome of that, the basic structure was decided around three pillars: activities, society and space, with the principles of autonomy and self-management representing the underlying concepts of this structure. The discussion regarding the economic structure of CB already appeared during these initial meetings (Can Batlló's, 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 1<sup>st</sup> General Assembly) and it was understood less as a question regarding how to provide the project with monetary support but about assuming the social economy as a political statement (Can Batlló's, 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly).<sup>37</sup> The second assembly was focused on identifying the challenges ahead, one of them being the heterogeneous characteristics of the participants. The discussion focused on the need to find a balance between the different points of view when discussions arise.

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<sup>36</sup> The Warehouse number 11 was the first occupied space. As explained later on, CB was identified at first with this space while expanding to other spaces at the same time as other projects were being incorporated. My arrival coincided with some debates regarding the identification of CB with Bloc 11 (warehouse 11). The assembly passed from being named Bloc 11's assembly to be Can Batlló's assembly in order to include all other groups who had not been integrated in this initial space.

<sup>37</sup> In Catalan, the word 'social' of the social economy concept is translated by solidarity economy.



*Figure 6. Blueprint developed and ceded LaCol*

*\*please note the area encircled in red is the one corresponding to Can Batlló's surface*

The principles and challenges highlighted during these first two assemblies have been accompanying CB's growth during all the years after. Many of the interviewees (if not all) continue to acknowledge the heterogeneity of CB as a challenge, while also identifying it as one of the most valuable features, one of which everybody in Can Batlló is proud of. Most people mentioned this when I asked about the positive values of CB: "Within some limits, I really like the heterogeneity of people in CB. I have never been in a project where there were 80-year-old people and with which I had a common interest. I think this is fantastic." (Interviewee Activities Commission, Barcelona, 03/08/2016)

In this section, I explain the nature of this heterogeneity by presenting the composition of the different projects and their multiple interests, as well as the basic principles and commitments required to participate in CB. These projects and commissions constitute a proudly imperfect assemblage of CB's machine which has not stopped developing since June 2011.

*The heterogeneous nature of CB's participation, its projects and commissions*

Once CB was occupied, people started to organise in working commissions and



projects based on their various affinities. I have already mentioned the negotiation commission, diffusion and strategy in the previous chapter but now was the turn to strengthen Can Batlló's internal project. The next commissions to be created were the activities commission, the library (long-term claim of the neighbours), and the bar, which provided the first economic support.<sup>38</sup> Infrastructure and design groups were also created, both in charge of coordinating the refurbishment of the electricity and water supplies as well as designing the space.<sup>39</sup> Later on, other commissions were organised in order to deal with those projects which wanted to be part of CB. Some of them were included progressively, such as La Fondona, Unitat 3, now called Impremta Col·lectiva (Collective Publisher) or the Carpentry group (La Fusteria).

One of the discussions that I experienced during my participation was with regards to how to define the difference between temporal activities/workshops, commissions and projects. At the time, these seemed to be very important; however, currently it seems to be an agreement to frame commissions which are working/facilitation groups, and projects as those groups formed by members with a common affinity and with specific project goals such as the library, the carpentry, and the documentation centre (CDOC), school, etc.

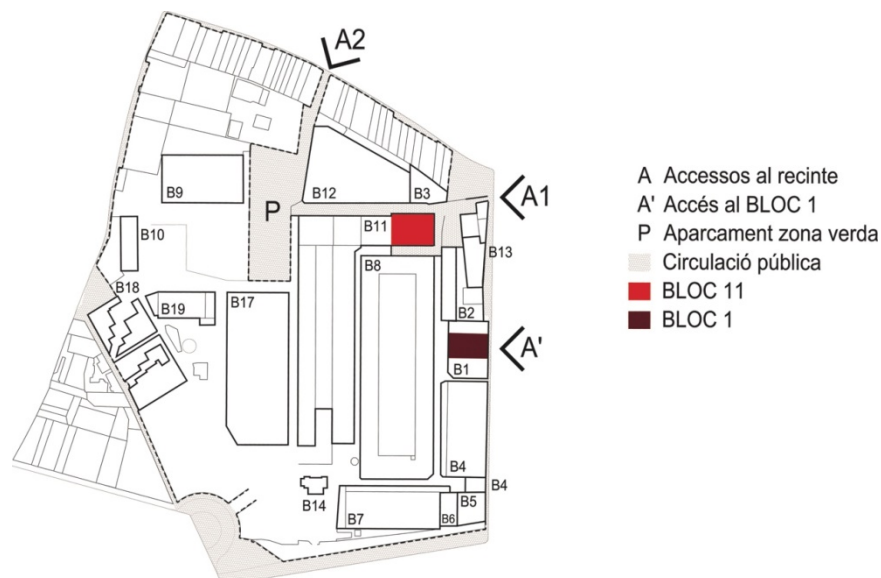
There have been several changes since 2011; some projects have disappeared or are no longer operating, others are new, such as Eines (which means tools in Catalan), which has been added during the years. Altogether, there are a total of 32 projects and groups currently active: activities, arts (fusion with Zona Onze beginning 2016), beer brewery, audio-visuals group, bar, library, (social movements) documentation centre, Coopolis (cooperative hub), communications and diffusion group, design of space, musical creation project, economy, Arcadia School, Strategy, La Fondona, Carpentry, gardens and allotments, publishing collective, infrastructures, La Borda (housing cooperative), La Nau (space dedicated to families with children), storage and warehouse management, mobility, negotiation, climbing group El Roco, secretary, circus,

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<sup>38</sup> All activities in CB are free; from workshops, such as drawing, meditation and dancing classes, to concerts, book presentations, theatre plays, etc.

<sup>39</sup> Here I highlight the organisation structure presented between January-February 2014 when I conducted this fieldwork; however, I will update when necessary in order to reflect the growing process and flexible nature of the CB global project.

In the course of my research, the projects and commissions that participate in CB were physically divided between those located in warehouse 11 (Bloc Onze or B11) and warehouse 12 (B12), as well as those projects which had not been allocated yet (see figure 5 where all the warehouses are represented).



*Figure 7. Blueprint developed and ceded by LaCol presented within the working commission preparing the debates between the 21<sup>st</sup> of October and the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2013.<sup>42</sup>*

Additionally, due to the amount of space needed and their characteristics, some projects have maintained a special status within CB. This is the case of Housing Cooperative La Borda, the School Arcadia and Coopolis. Currently, both have already an assigned area, and their projects have been officially approved by the district government (Almela, Setmanari La Directa, 16/06/15) while the area occupied by the school is currently still subjected to negotiations.

School Arcadia presents itself as a project based on the concepts of self-management and cooperatives' principles and aims to educate students under the umbrella of these values as well as promoting assembly capabilities. Because those values are already being put in practice in CB, the integration of such projects into CB is viewed as important. Likewise, members of Arcadia explained

<sup>40</sup> Eines is a project aimed at teaching mechanical and electrical skills.

<sup>41</sup> This is a publishing cooperative with many years of experience which has been added recently and will work together with collective publishing group.

<sup>42</sup> The figure is part of the questionnaire sent to all projects in order to define the future organisation of CB. A and A' refer to access, P refers to Parking which will be green areas in the future. The grey area is public circulation and Bloc means warehouse.

during the interview that they expect this to be a fluid exchange of knowledge and practices between the groups of CB and the school (interviewees School Arcadia, Barcelona, 27/04/2016). Similarly, the interviewee of La Borda confirms that CB provides the ideal framework to implement the cooperative housing project, not only because it facilitates the possibility of negotiation with the administration, but also because it provides stability and a support network difficult to imagine in other areas of Barcelona. This is an additional asset to the magnitude of CB's impact since it "allows us to dream the possibility of changing the scale of what can be achieved", for example in terms of the influence people can have on the housing market (interviewee La Borda, Barcelona, 22/01/2016).

Generally, the projects of CB can be divided between those that relate to the neighbourhood and care networks, public and communal spaces on the one hand, and activities related to the local economy, culture and knowledge, education and housing on the other hand. Figure 6 provides not only an example of the organisation but also the complexity of management of what is being discussed.

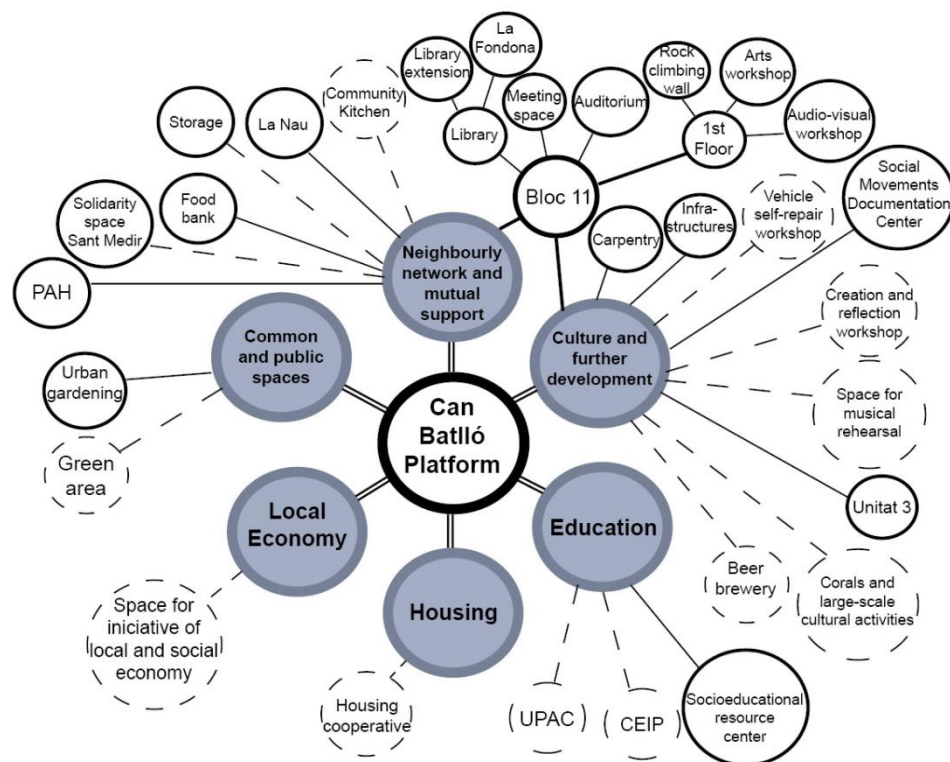


Figure 8. CB's conceptual framework decided during the debates between the 21<sup>st</sup> of October and 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2013.

This figure is the result of the work elaborated by two blocks of working-groups which met between October and November 2013 in which I participated. The

facilitation group met on 17<sup>th</sup> of October and the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2013, but the assemblies/workshops regarding the concepts that were going to be included and discussed took place between the 21<sup>st</sup> of October and 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2013. Those were all-day workshops aimed at reaching a common agreement regarding the future structure. The discussion was deemed necessary due to the rapid growth of CB, it was considered that CB had to step back and reflect on the basic structure that needed to guide their process. The work prepared for the facilitators consisted in facilitating the debates regarding CB's conceptual framework in order to situate the present and future of CB. However, workshops do not usually go as planned, as many people challenge or do not understand the work of the facilitators, which is at times quite discouraging for the people who have put lots of work into the preparation. Nevertheless, this is already assumed within the preparation dynamics in the sense that nothing is taken for granted. For example, group discussions are sometimes stuck in the details and much of the work might be dismissed when meeting in the decision assembly. This is occasionally caused by the different levels of understanding, backgrounds, age, etc.; hence one has to be prepared to accept it as it is an intrinsic part of CB. In my field diary, as I had to explain some of the workshop concepts to the group, I noted:

“I had a difficult group with X1, X2 and X3 and X4, who usually take loads of time discussing small details and have a different mental process in the sense that they take longer to understand what one means and are extremely critical, which I feel is a way of reassuring themselves in their own mental process. We did not have the time to revise all the questions (...) I struggled especially with one of the older people in the group. Occasionally, I have been noticing there is a generational gap which affects how included people feel within the decision process, but also some older generations struggle to accept other ways of operating.”  
(Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 21/10/2013)

Finally, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2013, a structure of the current and future of CB was decided where figure 5 represents a global picture of that decision. This framework only represents an abstract outline since, in practice, all these sections are interrelated, and all groups work together independently of their area

of focus. Most of the members participate in more than one commission or project, depending on their needs and interests. For example, some of the members of La Fondona participate or have participated in the Carpentry, Circus, mediation, the publishing group, the Bar or the (social movements) documentary centre, etc. Additionally, all projects and commissions take part in CB's internal decision processes (assemblies and coordination of assemblies), but also in the cleaning of the common spaces (each week one group or more in the case of small groups) and the rehabilitation work (every Wednesday and Saturday at 10 am) of the common spaces.

For example, in La Fondona I was part of a group of three people who attended the assemblies, workshops and dynamics with CB. Furthermore, I was one of the members of two permanent commissions, the Gender Observatory group (which I will talk about in this chapter) and the mediation commission. Alternatively, I participated in several workshops, such as the one that took place in October 2013 in preparation for the discussions and mapping of the (past) current structure of CB. Currently, to avoid exhausting people, the attendance to the coordination and assembly meetings is being rotated. Depending on availability and how they feel each member attends for one month or more. In La Fondona we try to balance CB's responsibilities with people's commitments with other projects, as well as their feelings and state of mind in order to organise those rotations. Most of the other groups also work on rotation patterns also. In this way, people from different groups get to know and interact with each other.

Like me, many other individuals also participate in the different tasks of CB while being engaged at the same time in the internal activities of their projects, assemblies and roles. Despite this, projects are constituted by affinity groups or groups of friends. CB's daily management and common duties facilitate the construction of inter-relational processes between different subjects, and it is not strange to find people from different groups collaborating together in other internal or external working groups. For example, this is the case of the preparation for an extraordinary assembly or facilitating the preparation and discussion of complex topics as well as arranging the logistics for the anniversary party, etc., which are prepared by volunteers from several groups. As I will develop in a further section, this is also important in terms of creating friendship ties and mutual understanding of each other's projects, which, in many occasions, is reflected in the decision-making process.

### *How to participate in Can Batlló?*

Throughout all these years of CB's occupation, it has been necessary to create more dynamics and working groups to manage the integration of other projects, as well as to systematise the working methodology and organisation of common spaces in a way that makes their inclusion fairer and more transparent. For example, during the first two years, there was a project commission which included all projects seeking to be part of CB. This commission was also in charge of reviewing, preparing and facilitating the process of validation which took place between October 2013 and February 2014.<sup>43</sup> The conditions a project required (and still requires) in order to be part of CB are as follows (Project Validation Assembly on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2014):

- Type of space: this means the project needs to clarify the amount of space required and determine whether it is to be used exclusively by the group as well as compromising to refurbish it.
- Temporality: it means that the project intends to be a permanent part of CB or it intends to create set activities, for example, yoga, dance, meditation workshops, etc., which are not part of a particular collective but require as space to run their activities a few days a week.
- Implication: it needs to be committed and take part in the common organisation of CB.
- Internal rules criteria: they are required to fulfil the criteria regulated by the internal regulations document of CB, be in line with the criteria of economic self-sufficiency, be oriented towards social transformation as well as being committed with the environment and the community.
- Regarding their responsibilities, the project has to respect and follow the assembly decisions.
- The projects are pre-approved by the project commission, annually revised and ratified by the general assembly.

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<sup>43</sup>This was a long process since the conditioning of space for the projects was not an easy task; the areas had to be cleared of rubble, painted, energy supplies needed to be repaired, etc. Likewise, the negotiation of additional spaces and keys with the district was slow. One has to keep in mind that all in CB is based on self-management and voluntary work.

Since 2014, due to some concerns regarding the inclusiveness and welcoming process of new members, a secretary group was created, which started opening three days a week and aimed to give support to people that want to participate, visit or perform an event in CB. Currently, the secretary works virtually. At the present moment, if a project wants to participate in Can Batlló, it is required to contact the secretary and send a brief description explaining how it proposes to accomplish the criteria described above. There is a dossier from 2013 which follows a short template: name of the project, timetables and contact person, number of participants, description, objectives, and implementation plan. Prior to that, projects needed to get in touch with the projects commission which met them and guided them during the process. Once the first big block of projects were finally added to CB, this commission disappeared as all projects were included. Currently, the discussion with regards to new projects has been simplified, and they are integrated progressively. The proposals are discussed in the assembly and validated. Due to the amount of work and the difficulties for conditioning the required space and the difficulties of managing CB, some projects had to wait for over a year but most of the time it takes several months.

During 2015 there was an extensive review of the different projects and commissions. This aimed to check if the principles mentioned above were being accomplished. A working group was put in charge of facilitating the process by creating a questionnaire regarding the economic and social activity of each group as well as planning four extraordinary assembly processes (between February and April 2015) during which, one by one, each project was discussed according to the responses provided in the questionnaire. Some, for example La Canya, did not made the cut. Others were suggested to merge because their activities were considered to be overlapping. This was the case of Zona Onze and Arts (both groups related to artistic activities). Meanwhile, others were asked to review certain unclear parts, such as their finances. This was the case of the music rehearsal group and motorbike garage. However, this last one, due to differences between the members, was required to repeat the process in further meetings. In this last case, I was asked to intervene as a mediator since they were in the process of splitting into two different projects, mobility and Eines. However, until this separation was effective, the group had to coexist in the same physical space.

As a consequence of the review process, a dossier (131 pages) containing

a summary of each project's activities, participation and finances were presented in November 2015 (2014 year summary). According to the summary presented on its first page, a total of 314 people had directly participated in CB during that year, 125 female and 189 male. Regarding the number of hours dedicated by summation of all the groups, it is interesting to highlight the hours dedicated to their own internal process are 6,418 hours, assemblies and coordination 2,654 h., activities in CB 25,568 h. and activities in the neighbourhood 1,573 h (Can Batlló, Resum 2014).<sup>44</sup> Currently, reports try to be more accurate and to homogenise the methodology through which the data is provided. For example, it takes into account the finances in a way that could be presented for auditing processes as well as specifying the different activities.

However, economically, CB and every project seek to be self-sufficient as well as based on principles of a shared and solidarity economy.<sup>45</sup> The projects and commission's benefits go to the common account of CB. The commission of economy is responsible for the accountancy (the different contributions are taken into account) and each month the projects decide which amount they require for their work. If money is needed, the commission or group has to present a request to the coordination assembly or in case the amount surpasses 300 €, they have to ask for the approval of the general assembly. Constant economic contribution from the projects is not a condition for participating in CB since economy is understood in a broad way, not only in monetary terms. Nevertheless, on many occasions, some of the benefits of an organised event, activities, concert, etc. (which are the main ways for some of the projects to collect money), are set aside for another collective in the neighbourhood or in Barcelona. This is the case of the events seeking funds for Can Vies (see next chapter) through crowdfunding or for specific issues, such as refugee associations or to support the fines of activists detained in police operations, etc.

Reflecting on the challenges of the participation, heterogeneity and inclusivity of CB, I must note that from the beginning I was surprised by the

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<sup>44</sup> Please note that this data only represents a general outline; it is not scientifically relevant since the methodology of how each group has calculated their time is not homogeneous or accurate. Nevertheless, it should give the reader a clearer idea of the dimensions of the CB as a global project.

<sup>45</sup> One of the structural topics discussed during 2016 is related to the finances of CB, for example on how to be more sustainable (currently the bulk of the finances are based on the revenues obtained from the bar) as well as on how to introduce formal work alongside voluntary work within the political understanding of the concept of self-management. This discussion, however, is ongoing at the time of writing and it will be continued over the coming year.



different political backgrounds and even more so of the diversity of knowledge and expertise of participants. Despite Barcelona being the second biggest city in the Spanish State, some of its neighbourhoods still retain a sense of community independently of people's upbringing. CB is very diverse, politically as well in terms of age, education and skills. Some people are architects, others university lecturers, school teachers, electricians, designers, contractors, artists, musicians, accountants, librarians, publicists, performers, students, electricians, construction workers, carpenters or housewives, while others do not have any particular professions, or are retired, etc. Independently of professions or skills, everybody is involved in the different tasks when help is needed. For example, La Fondona had no idea of how a book should be entered into a library database, but someone from the library has taught us; the carpenters teach us to work with wood; the infrastructure commission how to deal with the electricity, etc., and most of the time people contribute with other groups in one way or another. Through this, I seek to highlight how, despite a priori, one participates from within one of the groups, there are plenty of opportunities to collaborate and learn from others.

In spite of all, I noticed, many of the members (not all) are generally well educated, and therefore one could have the impression of the existence of certain elitism. In any case, this is something that it is quite relative as it is to be expected for people to be educated one way or another when living in a very urban area of a big city. Likewise, regardless of CB organising many activities related to other communities, such as supporting Palestinian community and political or economic refugees, prisoners' collectives, etc., most people are white and educated in a Catholic Christian culture (with some exceptions). This is even more relevant when one recalls the Catalan gypsy and migrant community in the neighbourhood. Some of the interviewees have also acknowledged this issue with concern and agreed that if CB does not want to end up in an elitist bubble, it needs to figure out how to reach other communities (interviewees Carpentry and La Borda, Barcelona, 03/05/2016). Similarly, other interviewees agree that CB should increase the effort to reach all neighbours in spite of highlighting that sometimes those are quite reluctant to participate (interviewee Activities Commission, Barcelona, 03/08/2016).

Another concern I had was regarding the generational gaps: some people are 80, others are in their 60s and others in their 20s, while the majority are

middle-aged people, between 30-50. Occasionally, I still feel these gaps are quite present but not as much as one would expect, especially with regards to the level of understanding politics, activism or social action but in their discursive style, methodologies or boldness when discussing some topics (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 21/10/2013 and 18/11/2013). In any case, as I will explain further, the decision-making process is based on the consensus of all the members present in the assembly, which implies that a collective compromise needs to be reached. In this sense, what seems to be an issue of generational gap a priori is much blurred once people work together towards a common idea. This heterogenic composition and multiplicity of views make it difficult for researchers to find a common frame within each includes all the significative nuances shaping and transforming values. Age, education, sexes, ideologies are not enough to describe those alliances based on something more ethereal as relationships. The next sections explore the practices and idiosyncrasy that shapes those relationships.

### **Internal processes and relations: managing Can Batlló's differences and methods.**

Can Batlló's structure is composed of several decision-making bodies: the internal set of rules, the general assembly, extraordinary assembly and coordination assembly. Decision processes are guided by principles contained within the internal set of rules (called *Règim Intern*), but it is in the general assembly and the extraordinary assembly, where the decisions affecting CB are taken. The coordination assembly is in charge of pre-discussing and preparing the topics for the assembly. At the same time, projects and commissions also have internal assemblies, decisions and processes where common decisions and proposals regarding CB should also be discussed. Additionally, when assisting any assembly or meeting, people tend to speak representing their collective. Personal opinions, on the other hand, are usually highlighted as being a personal opinion.

During 2012, as a consequence of different debates regarding how to organise, an internal document (15 pages) was created to guide the criteria and principles of the Bloc Onze (Can Batlló, *Règim Intern* 2012). This document has now been embraced by all the projects of CB, although it will be modified as part

of ongoing debates. This is, in part, down to the fact that CB has not stopped growing in complexity and integrating new projects but also due to the new spaces which are added each year, expanding the range of topics to be discussed. New debates regarding the economy, paid work or other internal processes, for example, are forcing a review of the content of the internal document. Other examples are related to the incorporation of new projects, such as the housing cooperative, La Borda, and the school, Arcadia, which presumably have their own internal set of rules which could potentially overlap or create contradictions with the one of CB. An in-depth review of the document is being postponed due to the urgency of other discussions regarding structural matters. In general, it is acknowledged by everybody that the internal document requires discussions and adjustments. However, since this involves a long process of discussion, other debates, such as the constitution as a formal association, have been pushed to the top of the priority list. In any case, if during debates a topic which impacts on the internal document is brought up, it is argued on the spot and taken into account for future adjustments to be made.

The internal rules document is divided into thematic sections: definition, internal organisation, activities and economy. All the projects must abide by the decisions of the general assembly and be committed to the social transformation of the neighbourhood. That has been labelled as “social refund”. Among all these criteria it is important to highlight point 3.H (CB, Règim Intern, 2012 p. 11) regarding political and religious activities. “No political party, political platform, syndicate, religious organisation or entity linked to them” is allowed to participate in Bloc 11, use the space, manifest be part of Bloc 11 or exhibit any symbolism. “The plurality of ideologies and laicism should be the framework of Bloc Onze identity” (ibid). Likewise, Bloc 11 will not allow any manifestation of xenophobia, fascism, Nazism or any discrimination towards religious, sexual orientations or gender (ibid). Currently, people do not refer to Bloc 11 anymore (maybe only when referring to the physical area) but to CB in general and the internal regulations have been integrated into this concept.

One example of how the internal set of rules is applied, while also pointing out the need for a more profound discussion goes back to a debate in 2014 regarding the expression of political parties and institutions within CB. At that time, Barcelona Comú, one of the municipalist parties which have formed the local government of the city since elections in May 2015, wanted to organise an

assembly in CB. This was approved by the activities commission, thinking that it was a private closed meeting. However, a few days before the meeting took place other members of CB found out that the meeting was announced as public and they started questioning around. Among those was La Fondona, who decided to send an email appealing to the internal regulations laid out in point 3. H. and asked for the meeting to be cancelled. The activities commission apologised to the CB members and indeed the meeting was cancelled due to the discontent which had been generated. What followed during the next coordination meetings and assemblies was a series of discussions regarding the interpretation of the internal regime and what being a municipalist party meant, as well as other non-institutionalised political expressions present in CB every day.

Nonetheless, because of the breadth of such a discussion and the priority of others, the debate was again postponed. Yet, the need for a more unambiguous set of rules is a recurrent issue of debate which has been brought up in many other occasions. The debates that have been taking place during all 2016 regarding the constitution in association or the current debates regarding the economy and paid work are just further examples of this. I argue this issue needs to be addressed urgently, even if it is highly controversial. CB needs to define and strengthen its political statement with the agreement and compromise of all its members. Similarly, in order to avoid the stagnation of the project in an empty theoretical discussion, the debate needs to go beyond any debate regarding ideology and/or creating any hierarchy between the different approaches. Despite already being very aware of their differences, CB's members need to acknowledge, embrace and overcome their political differences in a more conscious manner. By defining these and bringing them to the centre of the discussions they should realise that the assemblage of their different positions and political subjectivities is what makes this project strong. On the other hand, I also noticed that the lack of focus on this discussion has also favoured the construction of a common vision of the project beyond its theoretical interpretation, by putting the focus on the construction of relationships and networks of care first, as well as letting difference speak for itself instead of contextualizing it within an a priori conceptualisation of their political identity.

Can Batlló's rich complexity of functions and heterogeneity render the political substance of the project and is reinforced by the lack of discussions about traditional ideologies. Consequently, the focus on everyday practices as part of

micropolitical discussions makes of CB a discursive space for social change. Attending to Deleuze and Guattari's micropolitical understanding of resistances, CB cannot be captured by "structured *dispositifs* of power (knowledge)" (Krause and Rölli, 2013, p. 243). Likewise, Krause and Rölli, in their analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's state that "micropolitical engaged forces and processes cannot be adequately evaluated and measured if they are judged according to manifest social conditions" (ibid).

### *Can Batlló's assembly process*

Like many other resistance collectives in Barcelona, CB is organised around assemblies which are open to public attendance. On the one hand, there are internal assemblies in each project or group who decide for themselves on how to organise. Some tend to meet once a month, others every week, etc.<sup>46</sup> An assembly for coordination also takes place every Thursday at 19:00, except in weeks where a general assembly is planned.

The participation in the general assembly depends on how big a group is, but the general assembly usually gathers between 40 to 50 people with at least one member of each group participating. In all of them, decisions are taken by consensus (to this date there has not been a single decision that has been taken by voting or any other more conventional form) and, in all of them there is a moderator and one person responsible for taking the minutes, which are later sent via email to a distribution list as well as being published on CB's web page. There is also a template for taking the minutes which has also been applied with more or less success and flexibility depending on who is taken the minutes.

The assembly is structured as follows: people gather at 19:00 in the auditorium, the chairs are arranged in a circle, and the sound system, as well as the projector, computers and other materials, are prepared. Once the roles of moderator, speaking-turns and minutes are assigned, each participant names the group they represent. Firstly, brief points are announced, and the topics to be discussed are briefly explained. Secondly, the main points which have been prepared by the coordination assembly are discussed. They are presented/

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<sup>46</sup> For the last two years the assemblies have been scheduled for the last Wednesday of every month at 19:00. For example, from the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2013 to 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2014, I participated in 40 assemblies: La Fondona (every 2 weeks), Bloc 11 (monthly), General assembly of CB (monthly), Coordination Assembly (weekly), Projects assembly, Extraordinary assembly and in the Library (we participate on it as members of La Fondona and, therefore, our presence is not always required).

explained while people interested in giving their opinion raise their hand in order for their name to be listed for questions or comments. The moderator is in charge of facilitating the discussion, as well as keeping the time and noting the proposals for resolution/agreement of each topic. Decisions are taken when nobody opposes the propositions. If various proposals are discussed, people tend to try to find a compromise between them or argue in favour of one or the other. At the end of the assembly, a review of the agreements reached, and dates of future events are mentioned again. The estimated time for this process is between 2 to 3 hours, and only if the assembly exceeds this timeframe a new assembly is proposed. In any case, this is a very flexible process and many decisions about how to proceed are taken in the course of the discussions.

In case of disagreement on one of the topics (see concrete examples further in this section) there are several procedures to unlock the discussions. One is to follow up in the next assembly; the other is to invoke an extraordinary assembly in which case a working group will be created in order to facilitate the discussion. However, if the conflict goes beyond the topic discussed directly involving two groups or several people, a mediation process is arranged. I am part of this mediation group, together with another person who also has mediation experience. I have participated on three mediations, the first between the design and the musical arts group in 2014, the second between the library and the documentation centre and the third between the mobility group and one of its members in 2015. Although I have not been authorised to disclose any of the mediation content, I can say that these disagreements mainly emerge due to miscommunication between the groups as well as a lack of understanding and, on occasion, empathy for the autonomy, dynamics and tempos of each group. Although some individuals were not so happy about entering into a mediation process, they accepted to do so since it was proposed by the general assembly. In each case, I followed professional mediation guidelines based on the principles of impartiality, and confidentiality and this being voluntary; however, in practice, I used a more transformative approach in order for the participants to reach agreements on each topic of the proposed agenda. Nevertheless, on one occasion I was forced to use shadow mediation, and the agreement consisted only in getting the parts to acknowledge each other's points of view. In all cases, a letter and email informing the wider population of CB of the process and the circumstances were sent to the email list.

Although currently the assembly process is much more fluid, it has not always been easy to reach agreements by consensus. For example, at the end of my field diary I wrote my first reflections regarding the assembly process and I noted that time constraint is one of the problems/ issues that limits the assembly. Despite this issue, people who want/ need to talk about more philosophical or less pragmatic issues; the focus seems to usually lie on the functionality of CB. This is something that frustrated me greatly; however, I realised that those debates always come back and there are many occasions to talk about. The following paragraphs explain some of the adjustments made to the assembly and its discussions in order to address precisely those issues. In doing so, I hope to illustrate the methodology used by the assembly in case of disagreement or discontent but also to prove the constant self-reflection capacity of CB members.

#### *The decision of creating an extraordinary assembly*

Along these years of CB's existence as a common project, and due to its expansion, the decision processes have adapted to different circumstances. Through the first years the space used was restricted to Bloc11; hence the assembly was called Bloc Onze assembly. This has ensured that older commissions feel identified with the assembly group, while the new projects used to feel a bit side-lined. Nevertheless, the increasing complexity of the decision-making process, such as the number of projects and their nature, as well as the variety of topics to be discussed and the time required, started to be a cause of disagreement among the groups. Since decisions are only taken by consensus, the assembly's discussions tended to last over three hours and took up most of the time and energy of the participants. Time was absorbed by decisions about issues related to day-to-day management, "brief" information speeches which are/were rarely brief, endless discussions and repetitions of the same topics and opinions.

After a discussion during the Bloc11 assembly on 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2014, it was evident that this process had to be reviewed. Likewise, corridor conversations made clear that there were some pending issues, such as the legal constitution of CB and an establishment of a clear political line of thought. Those debates were impossible to have within the current time framework of the assembly process. Thus, two extraordinary assemblies (12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2014) were organised in order to decide whether it was necessary to have one

or two assemblies and how to label them because calling them Bloc11 assembly was not inclusive with those projects located in other warehouses, such as the mobility group, La Nau, etc.

I participated in the group in charge of preparing the assemblies. We prepared some proposals to be discussed by playing some roles. We explained these dynamics but right from the start the Bar commission was against participating in them, meaning we would have to develop another formula in agreement with everybody. They argued that people are mature enough to expose arguments in favour or against the proposals without the need of playing any role-game. Thus, as usual, a discussion followed, with the different sections exposing their arguments.

This first extraordinary assembly was quite heated, with some voices even proposing to vote between the different proposals, a stance that was refused immediately by most of the participants. Several suggestions were discussed, one in favour of two assemblies, one focused on social-political topics and the other on day-to-day discussions. Another proposal defended the idea of one single assembly, in which should be included the people of Bloc Onze, Housing Cooperative and the School which have their own document of internal rules.<sup>47</sup> This proposition shifted the responsibility to the coordination assembly, as in charge of organising the agenda and topics for discussion.<sup>48</sup> Other proposals fluctuated between these two extremes, proposing to call for extraordinary assemblies when necessary and others proposing an extra working commission that would work on additional topics, such as defining a more political form, discussing the internal rules, the economic structure, etc. The first assembly concluded with no clear agreement and after much discussion it was narrowed to 3 proposals. On my field notes I recall this process as follows:

“Finally, it has been agreed to prepare another assembly to discuss this issue since consensus was not reached. The most interesting thing about this process is the corridor chats. Someone said, “where the assembly does not reach, it does the corridor” (I did not note who mentioned this).

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<sup>47</sup> Both groups participate in the assembly as well as the common duties.

<sup>48</sup> Although this has changed with time and the incorporation of new projects, the participation in the coordination assembly, which takes place once a week, was much reduced and the topics and discussions tended to become more complex. Currently the coordination assembly is attended by almost every group; the meetings are still long but far more dynamic.



Some voices start to speak about an underlying conflict in relation to roles, dynamics, power relations, etc. Others, or the same ones, started to feel pessimistic and feel tired of never-ending discussions and repetitions and the lack of political discussions. (...) I feel the positions somehow could be very similar, but they are not willing to accept it or listen to it. I think the situation is less dramatic than it seems, and it will be very positive to see people willing to unlock the situation as in fact it has been expressed. Outside the assembly space, discussions are taken in a more friendly and relaxed manner. I mean that most people do not take the conflict home. I consider it would be a good idea to organise a get-together and work on the positive aspects of working together in CB in order to limit these conflicts, whilst at the same time there is a need to recognise the existence of these problems.”

While the first assembly to discuss these issues had been so controversial and heated, people arrived for the second assembly with a different predisposition and ready to compromise. This was in my view, as expressed in the fieldwork diary mentioned above, a consequence of those corridor chats and (common) reflections as well as the will for reaching an understanding. I have seen on many occasions people arguing vehemently in an assembly and at the end of it approaching the other, apologising and continuing in discussion quite normally for another half hour (at least). Similarly, in this case it was almost immediately agreed to maintain one assembly that, instead of meeting every month, it would meet every two weeks. It was also agreed to maintain one of the assemblies as a mono-thematic one, in order to discuss a particular topic more extensively. To tackle one of the weaknesses of the assemblies, it was agreed that the first mono-thematic assembly should be about assembly methodology (which took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2014). The fact of having reached a consensus about what had been such a controversial topic left everybody very satisfied and reassured and convinced of their ability to overcome conflicts by consensus.

Currently, the general assembly has more or less maintained this structure. There is a fixed assembly that takes place the last Wednesday of the month and there are additionally monothematic assemblies proposed on demand. Once again, the discursivity of the assembly has been key. Despite on agreeing on two assemblies, the second one is only summoned when necessary,

that was, for example, the case of the constitution of CB's society or other heated topics such as deciding whether to charge for concerts and other events. Occasionally, those extraordinary assemblies take place during the morning of Saturday over several weekends in order to make sure that the decision is well informed and agglutinates all proposals. During 2016, for example, took place the discussion regarding the constitution of CB's society which took about six months to finish. The exciting part here is that all participants have been written down as founding members and each point was extensively discussed within the framework allowed by the law. Those points of the society legal document that could enter into controversy with CB's internal rules was emptied up of significance. Everybody agrees that the society only has symbolical value as a strategy for having legal support in case a confrontation with the local government should ever occur. In order to accomplish this, the final document continuously refers back to CB's internal rules and general assembly.

It is interesting to see how what once constituted a very animated discussion is today barely remembered; once again the predisposition of people trying to adapt to the circumstances has consolidated what a priori was perceived as a conflictive issue. Additionally, I must highlight the important rise of participation in the coordination assembly at the end of all this process, which passed from being attended by a few to being attended by about 25 people each Thursday. Thus, allowing the discussion and immediate agreement on some minor issues while at the same time coordinating on bigger aspects. This was a direct consequence of these discussions, since it was emphasised that the coordination assembly should be responsible of putting order for the topics to be discussed in one or the other assembly.

#### *The challenges of Can Batlló's decision-making methodologies*

Regarding this decision-making methodology, one of the big learnings is that it is possible to take consensus decisions and still be relatively effective in terms of getting things done. As I have expressed before, it requires a lot of commitment and work but looking back at all the materials produced over the last years as well as the decisions taken according to these patterns, it is certainly overwhelming. Accordingly, CB has passed from recovering one of the buildings to obtaining the keys for several more and will be negotiating the central building as well as influencing the next urban plan agreement, as I will explain in the next

section.

At the beginning of my participation, I was concerned about the different levels of understanding of the consensus assembly process among the participants; generational gaps, underlying powers, egos, etc. that could impact on the horizontal notion of the project. Nevertheless, I learned soon enough that in an assembly of at least 50 people coming from very heterogeneous backgrounds, and multiple political understandings where horizontality was so consciously assumed, these potential inequalities were quickly neutralised. Additionally, getting to know participants individually made my analysis of this process less judgemental, more empathic and generous, which I felt was more in line with the ethos of CB. At the end of the day, people participating from different spaces have become friends regardless of which project they belong to, and as they always told me - after the assembly, arguments are forgotten, and the important thing is that “we can have a beer together”.

In the similar way, I have experienced that developing these relations has affected my way of looking at the different personalities expressed within the assembly process, I can also say that those relationships developed on the corridors, parties, anniversaries, events, working-groups and even coordination assemblies have also contributed, not only to the growth of these relationships between the members but also to the capacity for being more empathic during formal meetings and, therefore, influencing the decision-making process as I have shown with the example above. As one of the interviewees mentioned:

“The coordination assembly is, apart from the festivities, a unique transversal form that is able to give a vision of what is going on like “hey listen, what is happening?” Or to show that what we are doing here is affecting others and thus, makes a concept for unity in CB (...) In my opinion, the coordination assembly is not the transmission belt, nor the motor but the oil, it is the oil to be used by the gears of the commissions and projects for them to work fluidly” (interviewee Activities, Bar and Warehouse management, Barcelona 27/07/2016)

As the interviewee mentions, the coordination is perceived as a transversal and fluid tool, where knowledge is shared openly and constitutes one of the functions of the machinist assemblage of Can Batlló. The coordination is essential, as it will

be mentioned later, because, since conflictual decisions are taken somewhere else, it overcomes the decisions blockage of the assembly and at the same time establishes a different type of relationships between the participants. I probably cannot measure how much those friendships/relationships and transversal encounters have influenced the process, but I can tell that it is a more honest and transparent methodology as well as being more difficult and frustrating as a researcher and as a participant but, therefore, more humanising in every aspect of the process. Thus, these relationships and affects bring people together in what Brian Massumi names a political ecology in symbiosis-tending processes (Massumi, 2002 p. 255; Massumi in Thrift, 2008 p. 193). That is in the sense that they construct self-activity practices or in the interviewee words “the oil” that greases the engine which goes beyond the decision-making strategies.

Some of the frustrations experienced are related to the amount of educational work needed in relation to the assembly methodology. For example, the lack of a fixed structure, protocols or methodology, as well as the fact that people do not come prepared; the assembly proposals have not been discussed within their own project (Fieldwork notes, Barcelona, 18/12/2013) or the minutes of the previous meeting have not been read, etc., have sometimes (as a participant and researcher) caused serious nagging and frustration. In these occasions, I just have taken a few weeks off and come back a bit refreshed. In any case, I am not the only one having this perception, so the interviews from the Arcadia School argue that “one should arrive at the general assembly with a preliminary debate done in the commissions/groups,” which is sometimes not the case (Interviewees School Arcadia, Barcelona, 27/04/2016)

Although many people possess assembly knowledge/experience, many others do not. I noticed slight differences between older and younger generations, however; there are always people that act as counterparts within the discussions. Besides the typical discussion regarding the topics, another issue tends to be on how long and how many times someone talks. Some people feel the need to express their opinion on each topic. I often realise there are those people that spend more time in CB and perhaps feel more legitimised or have more information about the day-to-day. Other members tend to speak less but I guess among so many outspoken people it is difficult to raise their voice. In any case, it is a matter of responsibility to intervene in an assembly, and most people do so if they feel strongly about the topic that is spoken about. Additionally, the

moderator makes sure by constantly asking if anybody wants to add anything else before continuing with the process of the assembly. However, despite this attitude, the need to organise some workshops to improve those issues has been repeatedly commented on in small groups. This has once again been delayed because of the need to discuss more structural topics. However, after many years, some procedures are implicit in the decision-making processes. For example, opinions are usually well argued, and proposals imply the responsibility for developing them. For example, if La Fondona disagrees with charging money for concerts and other events, during the next assembly or group-work discussion regarding this topic will present a written argument supporting the disagreements as well as proposing alternatives. All proposal will be discussed once again until a compromise is reached. In that way, each collective takes ownership of their opinions and arguments.

During these years many aspects of the assembly process have improved and consolidated, such as the rotations in taking the minutes, moderating, noting speaking-turns, the use of minutes-form, etc. This methodology is being introduced while doing, at the same time that some of its deficiencies are being acknowledged. Similarly, I consider the coordination assemblies have been playing an important role improving this process, in the sense that they are more familiar and informal hence opening the space for more laid-back discussion. Here too, some people intervene more than others, however, they tend to be more dynamic because there must remain enough time for all groups to provide an update on their work and answer questions others might have. Usually, if a conflict arises here, it will be brought to the general assembly. For this reason, the character of the coordination is different, as it takes the pressure from having to reach an agreement. This allows for a more relaxed atmosphere and leaves space for people to get to know each other better and inquire about their activities as well as getting to understand the different dialectical styles and positions. In the same way, as highlighted in this section, corridor conversations have also contributed to reflect on some of the issues in a more relaxed atmosphere as it is not expected for anybody to take positions. On the contrary, this also provides with the opportunity to evaluate what are different arguments and form a strategic position. In any case, as it has been repeated along this chapter, when working on consensus decisions it is difficult to get everybody to agree strategically, and therefore those powers are relatively easily neutralised.

Summarising, on the one hand, I realised that although consensus agreements on assemblies are a big part of CB's decision-making processes, it is important to take into account the context in which opinions are constructed. These are relations of trust and friendship between the members, small committee and corridor conversations, parties and events, working-groups as well as the coordination's assemblies. At the same time, it is important to highlight how the improvements of the assembly methods have facilitated the decision-process to be more inclusive as well as improve its efficiency. On the other hand, there is still much work to do: people need to be more prepared when assisting the assemblies, the methodology still needs to be improved, there are still many members of CB who do not respect speaking in turn or occupy too much time while repeating the same arguments. Similarly, it is also necessary to be more inclusive of those people who do not talk so much or are less articulate or shy. Finally, gender issues need to be included in each discussion in order to achieve a real transformation, but this is a question that I will treat in the next section.

### **Can Batlló from a feminist perspective**

I started my participation in Can Batlló within a small group called La Fondona (La Fondona, n.d.) with, at that time, 15 active members. That is a Feminist, LGTB and queer documentation centre, which is included in the library of CB, Biblioteca Josep Pons (Library Josep Pons, n.d.).<sup>49</sup> The documents collected are donations from other collectives, organisations, contacts and friends. Initially, one of the main activities was collecting and cataloguing documents, books, thesis, fanzines, etc., related to feminist, LGTB+ and queer topics. Two methods are combined: a mainstream professional one following CB's library and a freestyled one, which tries to escape traditional classification. This last one is currently on standby since the first aim is to get all the books into the library first. The library contains 178 entries (from La Fondona) for the moment and is also part of the network of social libraries of Barcelona (Biblioteques Socials de Barcelona, n.d.).<sup>50</sup> Despite being classified according to professional standards, the books

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<sup>49</sup> Named Josep Pons on memory to one of the neighbours of La Bordeta who fought for CB but died just before it was occupied.

<sup>50</sup> According to their web page it is a group of 21 libraries, archives and documentary centres from around the Catalan countries (Catalonia, Valencian Country and Balear Islands) which are highly linked to social movements and follow self-management principles. The objective is to overcome the model of traditional libraries and create new forms of accessibility and reading approaches.

of La Fondona are not included in a traditional feminist, woman, gender or LGBTB classification or shelf but prevail within other topics, such as history, technology, philosophy or whatever the book is talking about beyond the obvious aspects of feminism and LGBTB topics. In doing so, we want to reach a more general public, whom most of the time would not read books on gender issues. That means anybody searching a book of history or a children's book should find among them one of La Fondona's, which is going to be additionally marked with a purple triangle on the top edge of the book.

Additionally, La Fondona also organises workshops, book presentations and debates related to feminist/LGBTB issues, as well as thematic parties and celebrations usually related to important women and LGBT+ dates, such as the October trans, women's day on 8<sup>th</sup> of March, gay parade celebrations on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July or the day against gender violence on 25<sup>th</sup> of November, etc.<sup>51</sup> Within CB, members of La Fondona participate in many other commissions and are always very active, not only regarding gender-related issues but also in other jobs, such as the bar, workshops, coordination, etc. This presence of feminism and LGBT+ views and concerns in CB is perceived as doing activism within activism, which, together with the good relations maintained with the other groups, has ensured that gender discourse and awareness is mixed into the everyday activities and discourses of CB. Among some activists, there is already certain awareness such as, for example, the feminisation of language. In Catalan (main communication language used in CB) words can be feminine or masculine and, in the case of neutral or plurals, it is the norm to use the masculine version. However, it is common among people in CB to use the feminine version referring to the word persons which is feminine. One of the members of the negotiation commission who I also interviewed as a neighbour involved in CB's struggle since the 1970s (interviewee Neighbour, Barcelona 28/11/2014) pointed out that he still did not quite understand the reason for using the feminine version but that he found it interesting and respected it. It occurs to me that if we would not have established friendly links with the other groups those questions would have never come up and this would have lessened the open expression of opinion.

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<sup>51</sup>One of the events was a debate regarding the mass media and role of Femen. The debate was led by members of La Fondona, Pikara Magazine (feminist online magazine based in the north of Spain which produced wide read critical article about Femen) (Gimeno in Pikara Magazin, 09/04/2013) and one of the members of Feministes Indignades (Feministes Indignades, n.d.)

### *Gender awareness practices*

Another example of how gender relations are treated in CB was evidenced in a conflict in 2012 as someone who used to participate in CB behaved abusively against his partner. This person was immediately banned from CB, and the assembly agreed on organising a gender observatory commission to create awareness. This consisted in a volunteer group of people coming from different projects (La Fondona, carpentry, bar, allotments and gardens, library, Collective Publishing, design of the space, etc.) getting together and designing a way in which we could visualise sexist behaviour, micro-macho discourses, as well as the uses of sexist language. The first meeting I participated in this group was on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2013. My first impression was that the group dynamic seemed much more fluid than others, no moderator was needed, and people seemed more prepared to listen than to talk things in depth. Also, questions of power and how this cannot be separated from gender issues were intrinsically accepted (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 18/09/2013)

The group was named affectionately by the assembly, “the gender inspectors”. The first task was to pass a questionnaire to all groups asking about the gender distribution of roles and issues within their group. Secondly, a table-template was created (see annexe 4), which is used in the assemblies to keep track of possible sexist behaviours. This put attention on the use of language and the type of intervention in case any aggressive, loud or offensive language is used. It also distinguishes between who is the speaker (just recording if it is male or female, no names are written), and how many times people intervene, interrupt, etc. Thus, focusing on positive aspects, such as who passes the speaking turn or tries to find consensus. This table was created not only by La Fondona, but it was discussed together with all the participants of the group work. Each of us had some comments and amendments directed to make it more understandable. For example, we decided to add an extra spreadsheet with definitions and explanations of the wording in the chart. Additionally, the table was brought back to the general assembly for approval and modify the last details.

As mentioned previously, this group was the direct consequence of a particular event and of people wanting to visualise and change sexist behaviours. After observing how some of those behaviours are repeated during assembly



discussions, it was decided to put together a tool to envision those issues. Therefore, one of the aims was to create self-awareness of the use of language, gestures and expressions and how those affect others. Mainly, it is focused on self-acknowledging how we occupy common spaces.

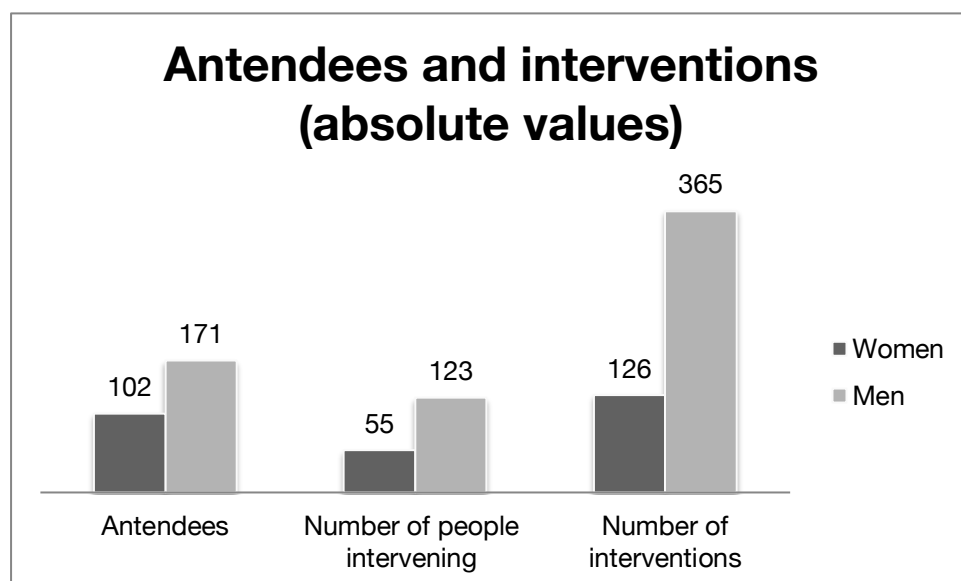
The “inspectors” are, usually a male and a woman, decided in each assembly. People taking the notes are actively aware of sexist behaviour as they have the opportunity to reflect on it while doing so. Some have commented that since the method has been implemented, people are more careful and measure the words they use. Another consequence of Can Batlló’s engagement with gender-related issues can be perceived when gender is introduced in discourses coming from people that one would not expect to do so. In one occasion, during some conversation regarding someone heated tone during a coordination assembly in which another male person addressed the use of such a tone as clearly masculinised.

Throughout the time this group has been active, members of CB consciously or not have participated in some sort of reflection regarding sexist’s issues as it was intended. For example, I recall in one my fieldwork notes: “after one of the gender observatory meetings, while going home, someone (middle age male belonging to one of the groups composed mainly by men) mentioned that he was very satisfied with this commission, not only because of what he was learning about but also because we talk directly about political issues such as feminism” (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 11/12/2013).

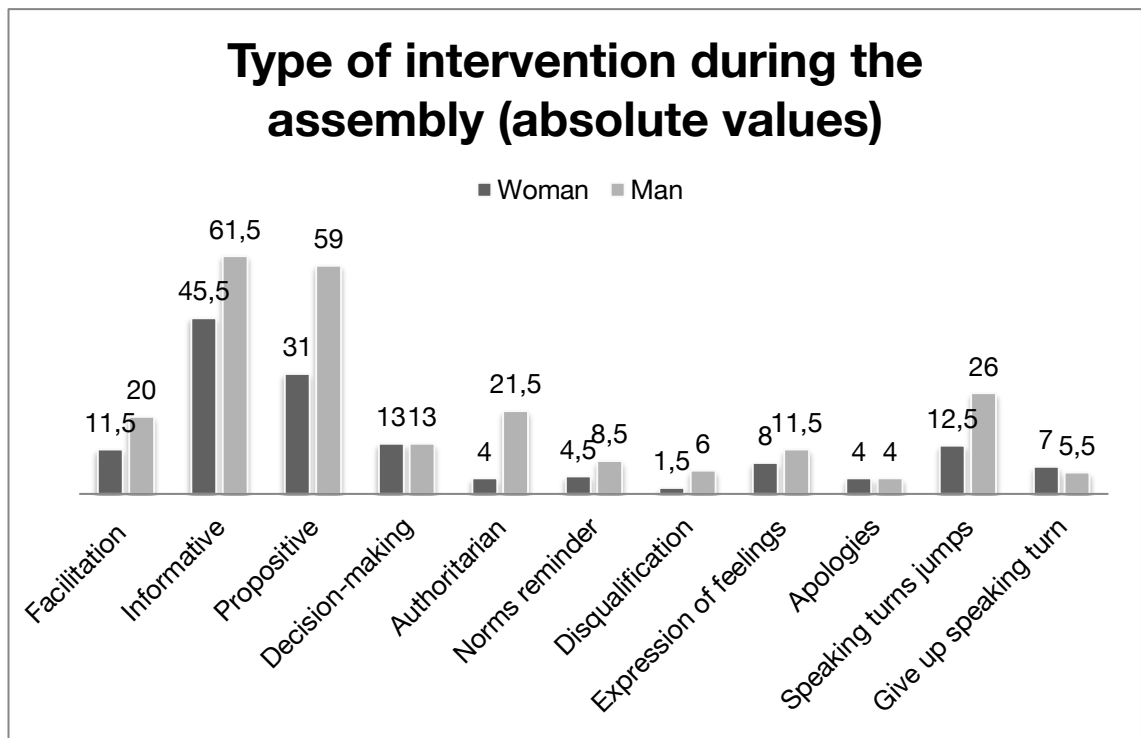
The result was then, although difficult to measure, an embodiment of the practices directed towards the transformation of subjectivities. The practice of active listening and interpretation of the assembly though concepts developed in the table constitute a feminist micropolitical act and a pedagogical tool. In this sense, the grid constructed by the gender commission is comparable to Guattari’s idea of the third object which he developed on his practice at La Borde. In this institution, Guattari applied grids, schedules, rotations and other experiments to employees and users in order to break with hierarchical relations and maximise communications. He hypothesised that “it is possible to modify the different coefficients of unconscious transversality at different levels of an institution” (Genosko, 2009 p.44). If well it is true that Guattari did not intend to construct a closed process, nor a model, his experience in La Borde can help the reader to frame some of the practices taking place in CB.

Nevertheless, it is essential to highlight that La Fondona nor CB is considered an institution, nor there is any formal hierarchical distribution among the participants and commissions. We did not evaluate the results from the same position as in La Borde since the contexts influencing the grids are very different. The gender commission created the table without having into any account theoretical considerations, and CB's members participated fully conscious of what were the expectations. In any case, the central aspect was the process more than the final result. The transformation of subjectivities happens in each person meanwhile conducting the observation of the assembly. The final result, presented below, is just an artificial visualisation each enabled a new common discussion which is by no means closed.

During May 2014, the first outcomes were analysed and presented in the general assembly of 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2014, and some amendments in the grid of questions were discussed and applied. I present below some of the graphics presented during this assembly (Figure 7 and 8).



*Figure 9. Conclusions presented by the Gender Commission (self-translated)*



*Figure 10. Conclusions presented by the Gender Commission (self-translated)*

Here I only present the graphic in absolute values although relative values were also available since the data sample is so small there is no significant change. The results are not surprising. Men tend to intervene more often than women in the assemblies; however, it is interesting to highlight that the interventions regarding decision making, expressions and feelings and apologies are fairly equal. In any case, these statistics have no scientific significance in the sense that different people took the data, and everybody had their own interpretation of gender questionnaire (Annexe 4). The exercise consisted more in the visualisation and creating awareness than wanting to extract any scientific data.

The group is currently not meeting; I suspect it is not so much related to the engagement with the topic but to the fact that it is very difficult to sustain a working group during a long period. Additionally, the members of La Fondona often complained that they were being seen as representatives of the group and therefore the responsibility was laid on them. Despite that, by the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, La Fondona has proposed to start using the table again and will do the follow-up and elaborate the statistical results. This has been received with much excitement by the assembly. The table has been redistributed via email in case people have any suggestions to make and later presented and discussed with the assembly. It was decided that La Fondona will do a pilot test

in order to detect any difficulties and needed changes. We noticed we had to include non-binary sexualities and transgenders as well as considering a way to notice micro-racist discourses. We are still discussing which will be the best formulation to include other genders. Additionally, someone in the assembly suggested recording the amount of time during which male and female intervene. This was tested successfully in the last February assembly.

In any case, gender-related discussions are also taking place in other spaces. For example, the climbing group has introduced some hours dedicated only to women and initiated a round of internal debates on this topic. Another example is related to the organisation of non-mixed activities within CB.<sup>52</sup> In this case, La Fondona acted as a speaker for Barcelona's 8 of March Commission, wanted to organise the non-gender mixed activity. Despite some disagreements, nobody opposed to organising this activity.<sup>53</sup> Not only they did not oppose to that but, since 2018 CB has organised a symbolic "space of care" during the 8 of March strike and demonstrations. In this day male allies stay in Can Batlló preparing breakfast and lunch for the women organising pickets and demonstrating. They also prepare an area for children. Lunch, for example, is prepared for over 400 people. These spaces of care are considered symbolic but pretend to raise awareness on the topic of care since, at least in Spain, this tends to fall on the shoulders of women (over 90%).

Finally, it is interesting to highlight that La Fondona, together with the activities commission, has also organised several open workshops related to gender issues, one the title being "Deconstructing gender: participative workshop on stereotypes, norms and gender inequalities". This achieved high participation of the public, and it was requested to be continued in the future. In the same way, some groups have asked for collaboration to incorporate gender issues into their project. One of the most recent has been de collaboration of La Fondona with the collective publishing group, which has produced a series of gender awareness posters that have been distributed not only in CB but also among other collectives in Barcelona (see annexe 5).

During the last years, La Fondona together with the activities commission has created a reading/research workshop. People from CB and Barcelona can

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<sup>52</sup> For example, the party organised the 8 of March commission (on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2016) with regards to Women's day activities.

<sup>53</sup> Catalan Association for the celebration of International Woman's day.

participate in this group which take place every two weeks. The methodology is also very discursive, we provide some basis of what we will like to do and encourage people to contribute with their own ideas and opinions. For example, the initial idea was to research read and discuss short documents, fanzines and manifestos related to feminist LGTB+ topics. The only condition was that they should be from the Spanish State because we would like for the participants to interpret the local history without the influence of another theoretical context. We started by reading and discussing the texts proposed by La Fondona, but slowly participants started to propose other texts and topics of their own interest. Thus, we have broadened the documents, so we have included books written by the FAGC about their own history; articles regarding the sex-worker union and the abolitionists feminists, text regarding the 8 of March movement, etc. This group is still active and is constantly changing, people come and go and come again and the themes, as well as the aims, are being reshaped every time. Once again, I could draw here from Guattari's experience in La Borde since we are also experimenting within the group and the fluidity of the participants. This fluidity of participants, themes and different types of documents used to oblige the group and us as facilitators to improvise but also creates lines of flight which in a sense aims to what Guattari's name the maximisation of transversality (Genosko 2009).

About my observations regarding gender issues, I must highlight that sexist behaviours are quite transversal and are a structural issue in every society around the world. In the cases of CB, men still speak more frequently than women in the assemblies, and their discourses are by far more bellicose in comparison to those of the women that intervene. On many occasions, the opinion of a woman has been automatically dismissed or arguments against sexist behaviour are seen with condescendence, for example when the discussion regarding the results prepared by the gender commission was presented (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 18/12/13). Not only were those results treated condescendingly by some members, but also, I spotted a few smiles and comments with a clear intention of infantilising those results. These were, however, ignored by the rest of the people present. Although my first impulse was to challenge this behaviour, I reminded myself of my position as researcher and I did not intervene since nobody else did, and it is not my position to influence the development of the discourse.

Here, I have explained a few examples; however, I consider that certain

success in this regard is related to the presence of La Fondona in everyday activities, not only those specific to gender or its role as a gender “gendarme” but creating a trust-space where gender-related issues can be discussed “relatively” openly for everybody.<sup>54</sup> That is, people can ask and discuss questions regarding gender and, in spite of this, there is lots of work and pedagogy still to be done. We also face less aggressive positions with regards to our arguments, which is often not the case in other spaces of everyday life. In this sense, La Fondona has a transformative influence in a mixed space such as CB as well as implementing feminist methodologies. Nevertheless, on occasions the fact of having the responsibility that comes with the educational role attached to the duties of La Fondona makes its members feel overloaded with collaboration proposals with which we are incapable of dealing. This is a general complaint of feminist groups and one of the reasons for the existence of non-mixed spaces as it seems that the responsibility to educate society on gender issues also falls on the ones who are the recipients of those issues. However, La Fondona, although perhaps not consciously, has embraced this role in CB, promoting a change from within in people’s subjectivities.

### **Relations with institutions**

The negotiation process with the district authorities was right from the beginning taken over by the negotiation commission of the CB’s platform. This was mainly composed of the members of La Bordeta and Sants neighbourhood association, although the participation is open to anyone. Many of the negotiations and relations created with the district can be dated back to previous negotiations and struggles which I have mentioned in chapter VI. This continuity has ensured a very well-informed commission that is up to date with the urban changes and laws that the district is pushing through. Hence, they are in an excellent position to defend CB’s demands.

Usually, they meet once a month and discuss CB’s related issues. However, as mentioned by one interviewee of this commission, they also try to advance issues related to CB during meetings on other topics if they consider there is space for it. When I asked about the relationships with the district, his

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<sup>54</sup> At the time of writing La Fondona is gathering different collectives in Sants in order to create a protocol against sexist aggression which is to be applied during neighbourhood festivities. Such a protocol has already been successfully applied in Poble Sec.

response was very clear, stating that they are good and cordial (interviewee negotiation commission, Barcelona, 31/03/2014). The district governor at that time, Jordi Martí, seemed to be open to collaboration with the neighbours, albeit his intentions were not exempted from suspicion.<sup>55</sup> The interviewee clarified that in the case of doubts they know exactly who the bad guys are (ibid). Therefore, they will always agree with the neighbours, no matter what.

Although many of the members of the negotiation and strategy commissions are also an active part of CB, the relation has sometimes been slightly controversial. For example, due to deadlines or the need for taking quick decisions during the negotiation meetings with the district, they did not report to the assembly as often as people felt they should. Nevertheless, this was discussed openly during the process explained in the previous section regarding how to organise and unify in a general assembly. On the one hand, many of the members of this group are seniors (in CB and other struggles) and, with some exceptions, usually men between 50- 60 years old. On the other hand, they have a great deal of experience and I must admit that my a priori prejudices regarding their age/gender have also been reduced after working with them for a longer time and understanding that there are a variety of opinions and personalities among them. Younger and female members from School Arcadia and LaCol have been incorporated over the last years. However, there is not a homogenised view on how to do things either. What at the beginning felt like generational differences, I now see them just as different personalities. Nonetheless, the criticism regarding the need for information was acknowledged and steps for its resolution were taken. For example, informational workshops in order to present future urban plans to the district council were organised (19<sup>th</sup> of March and 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2014). Additionally, the meeting dates and updates are now being shared in the coordination and the general assembly if a common strategy is to be made.

It is important to mention that the collaboration with the institutions does not come from an offer of the district, but it is a demand from the neighbours who want to get their needs heard. Anticipation is the biggest asset, not only elaborating a common strategy but translating those demands into technical and written documents from which start the negotiations. This is, for example, the case when negotiating topics like the newly agreed park of Can Batlló. The park

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<sup>55</sup> In spite his management of the conflict with Can Vies which I explain further in this chapter.

was agreed in the Urban Metropolitan plan in which part of CB had to be dedicated to green areas. CB presented a document regarding the neighbours' demands. During 2018, CB has been facilitating several meetings and assemblies in order to find a consensus with all the neighbours in La Bordeta affected by the construction of the park. Most of the ideas and concerns have been included in the final document. On the 17th of December 2018, a final assembly of over 150 attendants was mobilised to ratify the final document and present it to the district. Despite all this work, the final decision depends on the district but now the neighbours living in the surrounding buildings know what they agreed, and the same time, are aware of other ways of making decisions affecting their lives.

In relation to the dynamics during the meetings with the institutions, I must say that my impression is that each participant knows their role. Previous to the meeting with the district the strategy/negotiation commissions meet and prepares the strategy and the agenda that is being sought to push through. For example, I assisted one of the preparations on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 as the commission was trying to pressure for our proposal for CB to be approved by the municipal urbanism project of 2017. Therefore, most of the discussions were focused on that proposal (which one of the members of LaCol has developed previous discussion with the general assembly) and mostly consisted of getting the approval for allocating a space for the school, which had been modified by the (newly voted) district in the last minute.<sup>56</sup>

The meeting with the district took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2016; it took about two hours long and with the participation of representatives of the property, the district, the city government head of urbanism and CB's strategy/negotiation commission. As mentioned, the discussions focused on the modification of the metropolitan urban plan for Sants-Montjuïc. The aim was to include within the limits of the ongoing framework of the plan of 2006 – 2009 the requirements of CB for them to be taken into account in the next urban plan for 2017. I noticed that everybody knew each other relatively well and there seemed to be a will to reach an agreement. The proposal presented had been analysed and taken seriously, which was evidenced by the fact that the district presented

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<sup>56</sup> The school was approved by the later administration and the new one introduced some changes. There has been some controversy reason for what CB did a public communication in order to force the administration to rectify.



a counter-proposal taking the one presented by CB as a starting point. It was a very clearly structured meeting where each disagreement point (expressed in previous meetings) was argued, and alternatives were discussed before passing to the next point. The discussion was very technical and revolved around percentages of green areas and cubic meters, volumes to be reached, etc. Finally, a compromise was reached, and further steps were agreed. This commitment was expressed in expressions such as “what has been agreed is already agreed” (mentioned by one of the district representatives). With this example I want to demonstrate how CB’s demands are transmitted and translated to the institutions by working proactively and presenting elaborated alternatives. It looks like the key is to be ready ahead of them with a very well-studied and serious proposal which they cannot reject combined with a strong capacity to exercise pressure to ensure to be part of the decision-making process.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have tried to explain CB’s insights as I have experienced them from the point of view of my participation. I expand this analysis by presenting the concrete example of CB’s community. I explain CB’s structure, decision process, feminist and LGTB approaches and its internal organisation as well as the relation with the institutions and how those present a real alternative to the capitalist mode of organisation by pushing collective demands agreed through assembly processes.

On the one hand, I spoke about the modern and fashionable Barcelona of the smart city model, its limitations and its resistances, only to examine in depth one of these resistances, the experience of CB. This chapter explores the internal relations of CB. That is how CB constitutes an assemblage of multiplicities, capable of managing their differences and constructing their own knowledge-practices. The first part of this chapter focuses mostly on CB’s formal structure and procedures. I have presented its composition and decision-making processes, as well as its major disagreements and current debates. As part of this decision-making, I emphasise the general assembly, in which decisions are taken by consensus. However, beyond these more formal methods, it is important to be aware that part of CB’s success is based on that what makes people acknowledge each other’s differences based on the construction of informal relations of trust and friendships. This has been accomplished due to the role of

more informal activities, such as the communal work or even the coordination assembly process. Likewise, I have highlighted what has been the role of my participation, thus, providing me with a starting point to introduce the gender approach in CB.

I have explained all these from my own point of view and experience, taking into account CB's internal set of rules and other produced documents but I have also highlighted the topics and controversies repeated during my conversations with people. These are the type of participation in relation to heterogeneity, the decision-making processes as well as the concept of self-management and their contribution to the neighbourhood and other collectives. In doing so, CB's practices and method transverse people's bodies, times and spaces undoing formal and fixed structures and experimenting alternatives; creating collective memories and imagining new ones from which emanate lines of flight. On his account of Guattari's application of the grid, Genosko argues:

"Guattari understood recalcitrance, emotional cul-de-sacs, and diversions of every kind to be necessary to the ongoing elaboration of the constraints (all of the codes introduced by the ministry, by different personnel, silence of the catatonic, refusal of non-medical personnel to give needles, demands to be treated by 'real' doctors, etc.) that filtered the diagram; constraints that helped to make it productively imaginative, working matter transversally into new forms, by bringing together disparate components, persons, times, places, and tasks." (Genosko, 2009 p. 59)

In the same sense, in CB I have been able to experience the struggles, frustrations, responsibilities and commitments, which I would not have experienced with a more conservative approach. In this case, the analysis of my own transit through these groups has provided these analyses with nuances about the networks and relationships which would have gone otherwise unnoticed.

## VIII. CAN BATLLÓ WITHIN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SANTS-MONTJUÏC

This chapter aims to present a brief overview of CB's external relations. I refer to those relations between CB and the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc and how these, in turn, are also linked to Barcelona's resistance collectives.<sup>57</sup> As already mentioned in the previous chapter, most of the people involved with CB also participate in other collectives in Sants or Barcelona; one can genuinely talk of poly-activism. For example, members of the negotiation commission are also members of the neighbourhood assemblies (usually located in each neighbourhood); members of La Fondona participate in other feminist groups, such as feministes indignades or have their own projects; some of the members of the design group work in LaCol; members of the documentation centre for social movements CDOC are also part of La Fondona, and members of Coopolis also work in La Ciutat Invisible, or participate in the ABS or L'Espai Obert, etc. Most of these groups also tend to participate and organise together with the neighbours, not only in political spaces but also during other activities, such as the alternative festivities of Sants and La Bordeta. Likewise, on many occasions, people work professionally in organisations whose ethos, political vision and objectives are aligned with those of activists.

The link between CB and the neighbourhood is indisputable but concrete examples of how it works are given here. This chapter recalls moments and synergies between the neighbours, collectives and CB in which I have participated. Thus, the first section of this chapter points out two examples that took place during this research time-period. The first one refers to the events that took place during the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2013, when collectives and neighbours came together to prevent fascist demonstrations taking place in their streets. The second example recalls the eviction attempt at Can Vies, a building that has been squatted since 1996, and consequent riots. On this occasion, people came together and organised themselves to defend a space that has been seen very much as part of the neighbourhood collective identity.

The second section of this chapter focuses on the idea of self-management and the concept of autonomy, which has been key in the

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<sup>57</sup> I already explained some of the connections of CB with other collectives in Barcelona while discussing the city's urbanism.

development of CB. Likewise, I briefly highlight how those concepts have been reflected in the knowledge production of resistance movements in Barcelona and CB in particular. The last section, recalls the last question I posed to the interviewees, focussing on CB's future and the desires of the interviewees. Altogether, this chapter completes the field study analysis I initiated in chapter VI by presenting the context of Barcelona resistance movements contained within its urbanism. Thus, I started the analysis from the outside, only being able to provide an account from the inside through my participation. Furthermore, through this participation I present in this chapter, I return to the outside but embedded with the experience that has accompanied this process. Neither CB nor Sants nor Barcelona can be separated, divided and ordered in all its moments and experience as they are multiple and exist as long as they are becoming.

### **The participation of Can Batlló within the community**

Something I came across while presenting this research in some conferences, was the comparison of CB and Christiania, but this idea was soon discarded. As one of the members of La Borda and LaCol mentioned, "It is true that Christiania is a very powerful space, but at a given moment it created a frontier between the inside and the outside which does not really exist so in CB (...) or at least it is more blurred". CB collectives, he argues, are more in contact and in cooperation with Barcelona and other projects in the neighbourhood, with which they work in "synergy" while maintaining their singularities. Nevertheless, he states, "We also try to encourage these differences and these antagonisms" concerning the neighbourhood and this "should not scare us because this is where our strength lays." At the same time, "We must remain flexible and open, allowing more people to come closer to us. This, I believe, is one of the weaknesses but also an advantage of CB" (interviewee La Borda, Barcelona, 22/01/2016).

This antagonism and difference create the heterotopic space to which I refer in chapter VI. It does not have to be positive in itself but it is always transformative and, as the interviewee mentions, although antagonising is necessary maintaining the balance is also challenging. In any case, the physical proximity between other collectives, the neighbourhood and CB's global project makes it difficult not to (inter)cooperate. Thus to talk about us and the others make little sense since there is a fluid transition between all spaces and towards multiple directions. Here I provide two examples of how those mechanisms and

synergies between CB, the neighbourhood and other collectives develop and organise, in this case, against what they consider to be a “threat” to the community they want to live in.

### *Sants Antifascist struggle*

Years ago, fascist groups used to celebrate the Spanish day (12<sup>th</sup> of October) in Plaça dels Països Catalans (Catalan Countries Square), situated in Sants.<sup>58</sup> Confrontations between fascist and anti-fascist groups occurred every year. Faced with the failure of the authorities to act, as Miró explains (Miró 2008, p. 18-20), the neighbours confronted the fascist groups and decided to intervene. In 1998 the Anti-Fascist Platform of Barcelona initiated the campaign, “Feixistes ni a Sants ni a enlloc” (“Fascists neither in Sants nor anywhere else”) which gave rise to an escalation of direct confrontations. Finally, a citizens’ initiative decided to create “Plataforma cívica per un 12 d’octubre en llibertat” (“Civic Platform for a 12<sup>th</sup> of October in freedom”) and, as a sign of protest, occupied (in 2000) Plaça dels Països Catalans, where these right-wing groups usually gathered. This, together with several actions and demonstrations, such as the one that led to a congregation of about 6000 people, put an end to the fascist demonstrations in Sants (Ibid 2008, p. 21).

In October 2013, during the course of this research, fascist organisations decided to come back and demonstrate in Plaça de Sants. This was considered by the neighbours as a provocation. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2013, a week before the demonstration was supposed to take place, an open assembly was organised in Plaça de Sants. One could recognise many familiar faces from Can Vies, CB, LaCol, La Directa, neighbours’ associations, etc. The discussion was about how to act, whether to use direct action strategies, such as camping and resisting in the square. In contrast to what one would expect from conventional interpretations of social movements’ strategies, it was interesting to hear that direct actions proposals came from senior citizens (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 06/10/13). Two lines of action were debated; against the fascists’ groups and against the expected police repression. There was also a brief explanation about how to act in case of being arrested, for example never to leave the

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<sup>58</sup> This day celebrates the beginning of the American colonisation initiated by Christopher Columbus with all the controversy that this entails.

demonstration alone, distribution of emergency telephone numbers in case of any threats, as well as the creation of Twitter and WhatsApp accounts in order to report anything suspicious or in case of detecting any dangerous spot (Ibid).<sup>59, 60</sup>

During that week, several actions and assemblies took place, the next assembly/demonstration being on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October. Some actions were directed towards informing people on the street as well as getting in touch with business owned by migrants' communities, while some people got in touch with the district and demanded a ban on the fascist demonstrations. Among those people contacting the district representatives were some members of the neighbourhood associations who also participate in CB, hence making use of the contacts constructed along years of negotiations. The Social Centre of Sants (Centre Social de Sants, Federació d'associacions de veïns i veïnes de Barcelona, 2013) published a manifesto confirming the meeting with the district representatives in agreement with what was said in the assembly:

"Yesterday 7th of October, about twenty entities have met with the district representatives of Sants-Montjuïc in order to carry out the agreements of yesterday's people's assembly. In this sense, we have demanded an active implication of the district to stop the Nazi-fascist demonstration. We have demanded a public positioning of the district government team in this direction. Likewise, we have communicated our planned protest on the 12th of October." (Centre Social de Sants, 2013)

The petition is signed by: Sants Neighbourhood Assembly, Sants Social centre, La Bordeta Neighbourhood Commission, Can Batlló, 15M Assembly Sants-Les Corts, 15M Assembly La Marina, Festivities Commission of Sagunt Street, Castellars of Sants, Espai Obert, CUP Sants, Sants-Montjuic for Independence, Independentist Casal (house), La Ciutat Invisible, Negres Tempestes, etc.<sup>61,62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> This is a common care practice when participating in a (non-violent) demonstration since police will look for dispersed demonstrators. For example, it is common that after a demonstration we try to reach each other by phone, message or WhatsApp and ask if we are ok or advise where conflict areas are. One is not considered to be safe after several hours have passed because (secret) police tend to follow people coming from the demonstrations. I think that police methods are very significant; however, this is a topic of another research.

<sup>60</sup> WhatsApp groups are very common, such as one for urgent issues, events or other activist related topics in Sants as well as in Barcelona and where many neighbours (more than 100 members) are included, who later forward the information to other groups.

<sup>61</sup> Group of people dedicated to the tradition of constructing human towers.

<sup>62</sup> Left-wing municipal party.

The fascists' demonstration was ultimately banned. Nonetheless, we occupied Sants' square on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October from 9 am. and, marched in demonstration around the neighbourhood. Later on, the demonstration moved to the city centre in order to link with the rest of demonstrations against the 12 of October that was happening in other areas. After many years of struggles and social action on the street, this neighbourhood is capable of not only creating alternative spaces of resistance but also of getting together when needed as represented by the different collectives and entities that signed the petition detailed above. It has constructed a set of resistance technologies ready to mobilise the community at any time. That is only possible because of the relationships and accumulation of knowledge that goes back to previous struggles, as discussed in Chapter VI and VII and beyond any theoretical interpretation regarding why and how resistance movements get together.

#### *Can Vies no es toca. Do not touch Can Vies*

The second example I would like to present here is another demonstration of how social action strategies are deployed. Can Vies was built in 1879 and passed from being a construction warehouse to be ceded in 1984 as social centre for the CNT (Confederación Nacional del Trabajo or, in English, National Confederation of Labour) (Can Vies, history).<sup>63</sup> Since 1997 it has been a squatted social centre. The building belongs to TMB, a private company which manages Barcelona's public transport. It is important to mention that Can Vies has won several eviction cases against TMB, which began in 2006 and followed with the ones in 2008 (Ibid; Albalat, El Periódico, 02/02/2008) and 2011 (García Pagán, El Punt Avui, 12/03/2011) which were stopped because of procedural errors in the accusation. However, a fourth eviction process was in its way aiming to end what was at that time 17 years of occupation. Immediately, when the eviction order was published, a platform in support of Can Vies was created.

Nevertheless, other events anticipated this situation which were taken as provocations (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 29/01/2014). On the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2014, anti-riot police entered CV at 6:30 am and retained the people for more than 10 hours. The excuse to enter was to arrest six people they accused of being involved in violent incidents during the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 (Redacción Web,

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<sup>63</sup> Anarcho-sindicalist confederation linked to International Workers Association, IWA.

Diagonal, 29/01/2014). Can Vies was surrounded by 20 police vans. The first message I got asking for support was at 6:50 am (Fieldwork diary, Barcelona, 29/01/2014) and the next, at 7 am, reported that at least 100 people were concentrated around the streets (Yustres, Setmanari la Directa, 29/01/2014). At 18:30 on the same day a demonstration in Plaça Universitat (University Square in the city centre) took place. Neighbours associations, collectives and also CB published a manifesto in support of CV which denounces “the constant siege police, a judicial and administrative siege which Can Vies has been suffering for years and state(s) our solidarity with the six colleagues arrested yesterday” (Can Batlló, 29/01/2017).

The following month the eviction document was signed by the magistrate and was supposed to be enacted on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. From that moment, the motto of this struggle was “Can Vies viu, barri combatiu. Si Can Vies va a terra, barri en peu de guerra” (“Can Vies is alive, combative neighbourhood, if Can Vies falls (to the ground), neighbourhood at war”). The support was frenetic: debates, concerts, open assemblies, symbolic acts, such as surrounding the district building, a torch march, occupation of TMB headquarters, etc. However, the most effective action took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2014, consisting of stopping the work at the district office (at 18:00, just before it was due to close) by bringing a signed document against CV’s eviction process. The document had to be brought by each person and it had to be acknowledged with a receipt. The intention was to provoke a bureaucratic collapse in the district office. More than 100 people queued in order to present their document. On the day of 28<sup>th</sup> March, the district governor agreed to suspend the eviction process. However, after the negotiations between the district, city government and CV broke down the eviction order was finally signed.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, the eviction took place; 12 people chained themselves to one of the walls and it was passed 6 pm before they could be unchained. Meanwhile, Can Vies supporters were on the streets surrounding the building (Ortega and Escriche, Ara.cat, 27/05/2014). What followed were five days of riots which concentrated more and more support at the same time that police violence increased.<sup>64</sup> Thus, between 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, the

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<sup>64</sup> The protests were also inspired by the events that happened back in January in a working-class neighbourhood of Burgos, Gamonal. In this case the neighbours rioted against the construction of a venue the costs of which people considered unnecessary.



neighbourhood of Sants was taken by these events and demonstrations, which went on from 5 pm until 2 am every day. This started to be known as the Can Vies effect. The demolition crane arrived on the first day. People attempted to block the crane on several of the little streets surrounding CV but it finally arrived and demolished one part of the building, but could not continue due to the social pressure. During the second night, the crane was set on fire (Escriche, Ara.cat, 28/05/2014). Over the next days, the riots extended to the rest of Barcelona and many people from other areas of Barcelona, such as Gràcia started to gather every day with us in Plaça de Sants to show their support. More than 50 demonstrations in support of Can Vies were announced. On Friday 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, the city government agreed to stop the demolition works and people started to clear the rubble. On the next day, the private security of TMB left the place, flowers were placed on the burned crane, architects and technicians evaluated the damage and, later on, a human chain with about 500 people started the process of clearing up, passing one stone after the other, which were transported to the door of the city district as an act of protest (La Burxa, June 2014). Once this action finished, a popular lunch and a wall painted by the children concluded the day. After this, concerts and other events were organised to collect money for the reconstruction of the building and a crowd-funding project was put in place. The crowd-funding ended on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 and 89,000€ were raised (Verkami, 28/07/2014).

I participated in demonstrations almost every day except for the last weekend. Those started peacefully but were transformed into riots in the later hours when the police started to charge arbitrarily (Ara.cat, 28/05/2014). The most intense moment I lived was when we tried to prevent the demolition crane accessing the street where Can Vies is located. In order to do so, we were distributed in spontaneous groups of people and communicated via WhatsApp, reporting in which streets the riot police were distributed. No other action was taken, just standing vigilant in front of the police. The objective was not confronting the police but to stop the crane going through. When some group spotted the crane, the location was shared, and the rest of the people mobilised towards that direction in order to stop it from getting through.

CB took part in all the activities also, signing manifestos, going to demonstrations, as well as organising concerts in order to collect money for the reconstruction of CV, etc. Individually, many of the members of CB were very

active in the protests. The police detained one of the members of the mobility group. I must highlight, however, that while the support to Can Vies was not questioned at all, the methods (related to the riots), seen by many as radical, created certain conflicts within CB's assembly. This is more related to heterogeneity and the multiple points of views within CB itself, which are manifested from time to time with certain topics, but which have not constituted a major conflict yet. Though, given this disagreement, participation in the demonstrations of Can Vies was understood to be a private decision of each member of CB. In spite of those divergences, the feeling was that the neighbourhood was quite supportive, even if they participated from their balconies, banging their pots when the police approached through the narrow streets, opening their doors to those that had to run from the police or filming police aggression. On many occasions, the testimonies provided by those neighbours have been key in supporting the argument of some of the detainees. Indeed, as some of the interviewees have confirmed, CB and CV were brother projects (interviewee Activities, Barcelona, 03/08/2016; interviewee CB member, Barcelona, 14/04/2014)

By presenting these examples, I want to demonstrate how resistance collectives and neighbours who, a priori, do not have any political connection, end up coming together according to mobilisations, knowledge, structures and networks which might not be visible at first. Thus, not only collectives but also neighbours prove how they are capable of going beyond their own political alliances to support common struggles. Likewise, their activism goes from reclaiming and constructing spaces to the use of more direct-action strategies. These networks are not only active during antagonistic processes such as the cases explained above, but also during festivities that take place every year, such as August street festivals, anniversary parties of the collectives or the popular lunches on the street, etc.<sup>65</sup> The festivities of the neighbourhood are also prepared in the same assembly fashion together with other collectives outside of CB. People do not only work together to organise the activities, concerts, etc., but they also organise how to cover the working shifts in the bar which are always supported by voluntary work. This creates an opportunity for people to connect

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<sup>65</sup> In Barcelona (and also Catalonia) there is a strong tradition of organising popular lunches on the street (mostly between February and June) where neighbours or collectives come together to prepare a common meal. One of the most popular is named "Calçots" consisting in a big barbeque of spring onions accompanied by beans and sausages.

beyond their own projects and interests while at the same time facilitating an informal space to get to know each other beyond CB's daily tasks and duties.

Altogether, this helps to create bonds which provide for the construction of a strong community consciousness, based on ethical and social principles, such as mutual respect for each other's choices and differences rather than cost-benefit, ideological, instrumentalist or purely rational interpretations as found in some social movement theories which I have pointed out in Chapter II. Thus, although the analyses of those movements from a rationalistic or identity point of view provide a valid research approach, their discussion seems to be stuck within the academic framework providing only a partial explanation of how those bonds are constructed and leaving behind all these processes which do not fit within those majoritarian analyses. This could be, for example, the organisation of a popular lunch or party together with people with whom one does not necessarily agree in political terms but with whom exists a common ground to put participatory practices into play. In this sense the interviewee of La Fondona argues:

“Something what seems cool to me is that (CB) is a neighbourly space and, neighbourly space implies, apart from the participation of neighbours, that not all the neighbours for the fact of being neighbours think the same way”. (...) This might be “a double-edged sword with whom I might not get along ideologically or politically but I think it is cool because there is always a point of encounter.” (Interviewee La Fondona, Barcelona, 15/02/2017)

In the same sense, Can Batlló is in many senses the result of those networks constructed on the outside, but which are also replicated from within. As some of the interviewees mention, CB is the reflection of the society we live in (interviewee CB member, Barcelona, 14/04/2014). Thus, the next section refers to those relations, knowledge-practices and processes which have been accumulated along the history of Sants-Montjuïc and how those are reflected in CB's day-to-day.

## **Can Batlló's self-management and shared resistance technologies in the neighbourhood**

As I have explained in the previous chapters, the idea of self-management and autonomy transverses current resistance movements in Barcelona. It establishes a diagram of networks and relationships without centralising or totalising and weaving together past, present and future struggles. CB as a space cannot be separated from what have been the struggles of the neighbours of Sants-La Bordeta, neither can it be understood without the industrial and urban history of Barcelona or without all those who have worked there since XIX century. Likewise, we cannot talk about CB without referring to its cooperative and the anarchist collectivisations history and the different resistances that took place in this neighbourhood. In the same way, it would not have been fair to talk about CB or Barcelona's current resistance movements without pointing out that they also draw from previous struggles and methods. For example, the autonomous knowledge-practices which developed during the 70s and 80s in many European countries, such as France, Germany, and Italy, as well as in the Spanish state. Despite the fierce rivalry between many of these autonomous groups, as was the case of the French autonomous movements for example, in other countries, such as Germany, there was a "tradition of coexistence and tolerance" between different autonomous factions (Schifres, 2015 p.51). In Italy one can refer to the "désiderante" autonomy or creative autonomy, more popular among students, unemployed workers and "feminist circles" and which tries to focus less on economic discussion and more on the "revolution of everyday life" (Ibid, 2015 p. 19). I cannot cover all the different influences in here but suffice to say that those have had a great influence in the Catalan autonomous sphere which also seems to be characterised for working close cooperation between the different groups.

The word "autogestió" (self-management in Catalan), a key concept in autonomous movements, has been accompanying CB process from the first day that the decision to occupy was taken. In fact, in a meeting with the district on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2009, the representatives of the neighbours explicitly expressed their will to occupy CB if they break the promise of providing the neighbourhood with public equipment. That which was not being done by the institutions was going to be done by the neighbours (Marcé, 2013 p.97). For CB this has not been mere words; each space was recovered, renovated, designed according to its functionality, conditioned with electricity, furnished and decorated with the

recycled materials donated by neighbours, while at the same time the whole political structure was being discussed, though self-management is already a political statement. As one of the members of CB mentions, referring to the first days of CB: "...the word self-management started to be part of people's vocabulary, not only among the persons directly involved with the project but also among much of the neighbourhood and even among the media..." (Ibid, 2013 p. 102-104). However, as pointed out in chapter VII, I was reminded during the School Arcadia interview (School Arcadia, Barcelona, 27/04/2016), self-management is not new in Barcelona nor the Spanish state. Workers cooperative date back to 1870, but many practical lessons to which the interviewees from School Arcadia refer date back to the collectivisations from 1963. Although initiated months before, it was not until the second phase on the 24th October 1936 that the Decree of Collectivisation and Workers Control was promulgated (Castells, 1993 p. 21). Union workers assumed the direction, administration and organisation of the production and services of the factory. Thus, creating a collective economy based on libertarian principle and autonomy (Miró and Dalmau, 2013 p. 173). However, Castells points out that the implementation of the collectivisation was activated impulsively from the workers, not as spontaneous generation but:

"what made it possible for workers to begin this transformation, without guidelines or slogans, was precisely that for a long period of time - from the 1868s onwards - 1870 - a great task of education and propaganda of the libertarian ideas through Ateneus, unions, cooperatives, etc. had been made; nor does it mean that workers did not have an organization or that their actions were carried out outside of any organization, because in most cases the initiative came out of the trade union organizations - generally of the CNT - at the factory level or section" (Castells, 1993 p. 20)

Castells (1993), Dalmau and Miró (2013), Diez (2014) as well as the interviewees mentioned above seem to agree on accusing the socio-political as well as economic powers of hiding the achievements of this brief period. However, as I have mentioned somewhere else in this dissertation and, as per the interviewees' comments, the lessons learned here are very much alive in people's minds.

Moreover, self-management is one of the conditions requested to all groups participating in CB; the real question is to what extent is this concept

understood? What are its limitations when putting it into practice? According to my experience, one of the biggest contradictions is related to the role and implication of the district as it is providing economic support for the refurbishment of big structural projects, such as soundproofing the auditorium, or the construction of a lift for people with mobility issues. There are two major groups of opinions, and one can see good reason on either side. It remains to be seen to what extent this is going to cause friction. One posits themselves for a radical autonomy from the institutions and the others see the economic support received from the institutions as a refund and self-administration of the taxes we all pay. The discussion is undermined by political and ideological differences among the members of CB and, I am pretty sure that this will be discussed at some point, CB's autonomy is not to be affected. In fact, it is being currently discussed within the framework of the debates regarding CB's economy. Nevertheless, this is a matter for the future which cannot be predicted here.

Despite the different points of view regarding the autonomy of CB, during all these years of CB's occupation many more things have been accomplished, not least thanks to that stubborn determination of finding compromises despite the multiple political views and different styles. Members of CB do not focus on the negative aspects of their differences but on the positive ones, those which help them to step out of the box of their comfort zone and thus move forward, in Deleuze terminology elevating the ground. Difference becomes an asset in terms of finding methodologies that help to reach these compromises as I have presented in the decision-making process of chapter VII. Likewise, their activism goes from reclaiming, negotiating and constructing spaces to be able to do a strategic use of direct-action resistance technologies as well as the silent transformation of themselves and society's way of thinking/doing during what in traditional analyses would be considered an impasse. This is obvious when looking at the way in which CB was reclaimed and its participation in the neighbourhood, as well as at its contribution to the transformation of the understanding of the way of life as well as everyday resistances.

For all these reasons, CB not only transgresses a space of multiple political and social confluences that goes beyond time but is also currently transiting and transforming ways of understanding our present. In a sense, this corresponds to Deleuze interpretation of Bergson's concept of duration, as it endures for it always carries the image of the past with it, but the past is also

contained within the present for both moments “contract or condense into each other since one has not yet disappeared when the other appears” (Deleuze, 1991 p. 51). Deleuze continues, “the past and the present do not denote two successive moments, but two elements which coexist: One is the present, which does not cease to pass, and the other is the past, which does not cease to be but through which all presents pass” (Ibid, 1991 p. 59). It is in that sense that CB is not only linked to its past but also, as we have seen in the previous section, it cannot be understood without links to other collectives and its neighbours in the present. CB is in Sants and Sants is in CB. It is this heterogeneity and transversally what makes CB a success and an example of how differences engage together in a multiplicity of actions that go beyond any orthodox analysis.

### **Can Batlló’s desires, future and the flow of knowledge’s practices**

I conclude this chapter by starting with the last question I have been asking the interviewees of this research: how do they see/wish CB’s future? Most of them aim to see CB’s as a reference for people to develop their own model and capacities, to (re)create and (re)construct different ways of living in the city within their own context. The model is understood here in a very situated way, as it is acknowledged that different city areas are involved in different processes, experiences and circumstances. Other interviewees prefer to see CB as a more naturalised element of the neighbourhood: “Right now is a matter of labour and struggle to make it work but a day will come that it would be a natural element that the neighbourhood would have make its own” (interviewee Activities, Bar and Warehouse management, Barcelona 27/07/2016). The same interviewee argues that CB does not necessarily have to be a model for other neighbourhoods. Although this could happen, his philosophy is “to pretend to do many things for sometimes little things are the ones that can be deeply transformed” (ibid).

Thus, CB aims not only to potentially be a referential space, which in many cases it already is, but also to facilitate and give support for the creation of new spaces in their struggle to reclaim the city. In this sense, it is important to mention this is already happening. Almost every week CB receives visits from other collectives, not only from Catalonia or the Spanish state but also from Europe or places as far away as Quebec. The history of CB is explained to them, in addition to receiving a tour around the area. Likewise, we are also invited to talk about CB in other organisations in Barcelona or other cities in Catalonia and the Spanish

State. Usually, collectives send an email to CB's secretary address; the content of the email is shared in the coordination meeting and through the distribution list where people who are interested can volunteer to assist or disagree in case the collective proposing the meeting is not in line with CB's most basic principles. For example, in April 2016 CB's assembly refused to be the host to an international philanthropy conference (Edge Founders, 2017) because of the utilisation of money as the motor for promoting change in societies, as well as CB being against sharing spaces with funders such as Open Society, Ford Foundation or Rockefeller Brothers Fund, among other arguments. For circumstances not relevant here, I was the main point of contact in this case and, hence, I was responsible, together with two other people, for gathering information regarding the proposing organisation (EDGE Funders Alliance) as well as presenting a well-argued list of pros and cons to the assembly.

Conversely, CB has agreed to participate in many other meetings, workshops and conferences. So in October 2016, as a member of La Fondona, I participated together with other collectives in a workshop organised by Ca La Dona (a non-mixed collective of women founded in 1988) who had commenced an internal process aimed to reorganise their structure and decision-making model. Most recently, in June 2017, another member of La Fondona and I assisted a workshop in Madrid. This was attended by other collectives from Barcelona, such as Ateneu de 9 Barris, and from Madrid, such as Project EVA (Neighbourly Space of Arganzuela, EVA, n.d.) and others, or from Malaga, such as La Casa Invisible (La Casa Invisible, n.d.). The aim was to do a little presentation, exchange ideas and brainstorming about how to resolve some of the problems most collectives face. Later in the month I participated in another weekend in Valencia (Plataforma Iniciatives Culturals Urbanes de València, n.d.) presenting the project of CB together with other projects from Valencia, Zaragoza and Malaga, again within a talk where the main speaker was Manuel Delgado, a well-known academic specialising in the construction of collective identities in an urban context.

Likewise, the distribution of knowledge does not remain in those processes of mouth to mouth so to speak, but it goes beyond that in many other ways. Not only are there many researchers in one way or another concerned with the participatory practices developed by resistance collective, but also there is an extensive network through which knowledge is collected and distributed to the



general public. Within CB we can speak of CDOC (Centre for Documentations of Social Movements) or the publishing collectives *Imprenta Col·lectiva* and *Descontrol*, and others outside of CB. This is the case of *La Ciutat Invisible* (of which I have already spoken) and many others, such as the publishing cooperatives grouped within *Espai Contrabandos* (*Espai Contrabandos*, n.d.). This last one is a hub and book bookshop for publishing cooperatives (50) situated in Raval neighbourhood (city centre). As they define themselves, the *Espai Contrabandos* is dedicated to promoting independent editions, political books and cultural activism. The bookshop is managed by the cooperative *Pol·len* (*Espai Contrabandos Interviewee*, Barcelona 30/07/2016). They are aligned with social movements' topics and seek to escape the traditional perception of organising activities, workshops and fairs in order to reach the public in a more horizontal manner. Likewise, the bookshop aims to escape the capitalist model of organisation by breaking with the distribution chains and marketing/selling strategies, for example. Equally, most of those cooperatives organise horizontally by taking decisions in assembly processes (*Ibid*).

All the exposed above proves not only the collaborative capacities of CB but also how the creation and promotion of the free mobility and fluidity of knowledge is not limited only to the internal relations of CB but also open to the outside. Hence, the creation of knowledge among resistance collectives is not exclusive to the production of academic material but is also the result of a multifaceted network of relationships and feedbacks amongst them. In any case, as one of the members of CB put it when asking about CB's future:

“The accumulation of experiences, even in the capitalist process, is indispensable (...). Sometimes, it is demanded from us to people who make projects a reality, like us, that we know where we go. This is not asked to anyone. Not even at the beginning of capitalism did people know where they will go. It was constructed on the basis of its process. We are building in function of our process. We move towards a certain aspiration linked to our everyday thoughts. We do not have the obligation of knowing where exactly are we going. We know the qualities, the conditions and the potentiality we have but we do not have the obligation of defining where we want to arrive...” (*Interviewee CB member*, Barcelona, 14/04/2014)

Thus, collectives in Barcelona create experiences reclaiming spaces and constructing situations where resistances take place. Following premises from Situationist International among others, resistances perform in the spectacle of the hyperreal city constructing experiences in which synergies are dedicated to “the integration of players and audiences, of performances space and spectator space, the theatrical experience and the ‘real’ experience.” (Sadler, 1999 p. 105). Concrete situations might be ephemeral and attract the media attention, as was the case with the 15M movement, but the experiences and learnings which remain in the subjects’ minds are the ones enduring during the (not so) silent impasses.

## **Conclusion**

On many occasions, social movements’ theory focusses on very concrete events only when those reach the public media, while those things/moments/situations occurring in the so-called impasse are dismissed as not relevant or uninteresting. Day to day resistance and struggles are also not worthy to be mentioned as being inconsistent with big blobs of data required to fit into one or another social theory paradigm. In previous chapters, I have explained how current resistance movements put their attention into transforming their day to day life and that of their neighbours going beyond the patronisation of governmental institutions and trying to define a common ideology or political identity. However, their focus on the local transformation does not mean they have to abandon their capacity of acting together. Despite the bulk of work is concentrated on everyday activism, direct action methods are still taken on board in order to reach immediate objectives as well as in defending their space. Thus, constructing an extended network of relations between different collectives as well as promoting the accumulation of knowledges-practices, methods and strategies, is not only to be implemented in current situations but also in further struggles.

In this sense, this chapter has presented how the above-mentioned everyday activism, direct actions, practices and knowledge-creation are reflected in CB’s relations with the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuic. I have provided an account of the relationships of CB towards the outside by exploring the edges between resistance networks and Barcelona’s city model. I have given extensive examples of the cooperation between CB and the neighbourhood as well as with other collectives, more specifically, with Can Vies. In the first section of this

chapter, I explained how direct-action strategies are put in place by making use of underlying mechanisms of coordination that have been developed during many years of struggles. In the second section, this chapter focuses attention on some of the main concepts and ideas sustaining those relations. I especially highlight the idea of self-management and autonomy and its relations with the autonomous movements in the history of Barcelona as well as with the 1970s and 1980s movements developed in other European countries, such as Italy, France or Germany. Last, I refer to CB's future, reflecting on how it has been transmitted during the interviews. Thus, CB's is seen not as a role model to be followed, but as one more example of what each community could accomplish within their own contextual framework. Thus, CB's aim is to transform its own society and by so doing transforming the desires and experiences of others. Consequently, I have analysed CB as part of a single body of collectives which constitutes Barcelona's urban resistance network. The single body does not here mean just one, but a multiple composition of rhizomatic assemblages in perpetual and nomadic motion; this is, a Body without Organs.

## **IX. TO WHAT EXTENT DO CAN BATLLÓ KNOWLEDGE-PRACTICES CHALLENGE SOCIAL THEORIES' UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEMPORARY (URBAN) RESISTANCES?**

At the beginning of this dissertation, I referred to the criticism received during a presentation. Let me recall: after completing a presentation about processes and interrelations that lead and constructed the 15-M movement, one of the attendees appealed to May 68 and what he considered was a movement without many repercussions (seen from today's perspective) implying the same destiny for the 15-M. Beyond the debate of what the consequences were in terms of institutional and political reforms (especially in France) of May 68, I argued that in order to truly understand the extent of its claims, greater attention to the processes and relations which drive the movement was needed. The experiences, memories and knowledge inherited from this movement have been highly relevant for the continuation of future movements around the globe. During May '68, Deleuze and Guattari argue, "those who evaluated things in macropolitical terms understood nothing of the event because something unaccountable was escaping. The politicians, the parties, the unions, many leftists, were utterly vexed; they kept repeating over and over again that "conditions" were not ripe. It was as though they had been temporarily deprived of the entire dualism machine that made them valid spokespeople." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 238) Henceforth, it seems to me that nearly 50 years later, we find those debates are pretty much alive. That is, the "dualism machine" keeps ignoring the micropolitics of resistances which make sense of today's movements.

In this same way, politicians and to some extent, social theory experts failed to analyse current movements such as the 15M movement as I mentioned in Chapter II. Moreover, social movement theorists still tend to see movements only as something disrupting "normality". The question is which normality? Is there a standard for everyday normality against which society is measured? There is a tendency to overcode reality failing to account for that which escapes the so-called normal. This dissertation has tried to analyse those resistance movements which go beyond the gloss of the event and escape the overcoding of academia and the media. By so doing, I approach theoretical views and methods from an unconventional angle which takes into account the fluidly and complexity of the social. This chapter revisits the work of Deleuze and Guattari'

in *A Thousand Plateaus*, especially the concepts regarding the abstract machine and the Body Without Organs which have been one underlying theoretical framework for this dissertation. Under these lenses, I will review and bring to an end (without closure) the arguments which have been weaved together in this dissertation.

Thus, the first part of this chapter goes back to recall the reasons for which current (urban) resistances epistemologies present a challenge for majoritarian social theory analyses. At the same time, I provide an explanation for my contribution to the field and the reasoning behind the choice of CB as a case study. Likewise, I go into more detail regarding the reason for selecting certain authors and theories (chapter III and IV such) such as Deleuze and Guattari's work, Foucault or Feminist's theorists such as Irigaray, Haraway and Braidotti as well as 'minor authors' as Deleuze defines them. I have encountered in the work of many local newspapers such the *Setmanari La Directa*, activists and authors such as the collective book regarding CB published in 2014, or the book *Epistemes, Fricciones y otros Flujos* edited by Solá and Urko, etc a source information as valid as any other authors I have approached here. Similarly, those decisions are deeply interwoven with the methodology I have developed in chapter V.

The second part of this chapter exposes the case of CB in relation to the concept of rhizome and how this develops in relation to Barcelona resistance movements. Finally, the last part of this chapter focuses on the analyses of resistance movements as embodied subjects and on how feminist approaches, explained in Chapter IV and V, contribute to that shift in resistances movements but also in social theory. I reflect on which are the most repeated ideas and concepts I encountered during my fieldwork and, put those in relation with the presented theory. Likewise, I review the concept of self-management and autonomy among others. Resistance movements do not remain fixed into one specific collective but are constantly changing and thus, transforming the society within which they are inserted. This nomadic movement, this eternal transition and becoming are necessary for "it is by leaving the plan(e) of capital, and never ceasing to leave it, that a mass becomes increasingly revolutionary and destroys the dominant equilibrium of the denumerable sets." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 521)

## **Reflections on the legitimacy of knowledge production**

In *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004) Deleuze and Guattari argue: “from the viewpoint of micropolitics, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular. There is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organisations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoding machine: things that are attributed to a “change in values,” the youth, women, the mad, etc” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 238). This dissertation is founded on the conviction that what flees cannot be quantified, categorised or rationalised unless there is an honest acknowledgement for there will always be something in the analysis which escapes that codification. If society is molecular, social theory needs to encounter a space where the analyses of such molecularity are possible without the need of making big and unmovable assumptions of what is the true, real or transcendent in their object of study. As Chesters states, “the knowledge-practices of movements frequently result from embodied and affective experiences that are outside the analytical standpoint of the academic, whose methodology is reliant upon the presumed reliability of simple representative forms” (Chesters, 2012 p. 147). Consequently, social movements’ analyses require the acknowledgement of the implied ontology in those representative forms. It is for this reason that Chapter III and IV analyses the ontological grounds of the conceptual construction of knowledge.

Despite many social science researchers such as Seidman (1997), Chesters (2012), (Ross, 2002), (Irigaray, 2002: 247) and others mentioned in chapter II claim the need to abandon the idea of totalisation when building up a theoretical approach, a big part of academia still tends to assume the idea that within the social movements there is a common rationalised strategy of which ultimate aim is “total revolution”. Similarly, there is also an inclination to search for theories and approaches which provide a complete explanation and embrace every aspect of the analysed movement. Research methods on many occasions focus on using statistical and comparative data able to confirm patterns, ideological identities and hypothesis as the best way to explain social action. Even more, the resulting findings should represent and serve as a guide for the analysis of past, present and future movements in spite of the lack (or not) of ground-based experience that those who build the theory possess. Although from the point of view of feminisms and assuming “the failure of the big ideologies and the growth of the political-terror model”, Preciado argues for “a theory of social

transformation and redefinition of the limits of the public sphere” (Preciado, 2009 p. 58) Thus, she opposes the need for labelling standard models in favour the “living revolutions” (Idid). I would also add, “little revolutions”, the ones of everyday which constitute the teachings of current resistance movements and which I have tried to prove here.

Thus, it is necessary for the rigidity of scientific legitimacy to be defied by those struggling for change on the ground but also by those working within the field, for, as Deleuze and Guattari argue: “History is made only by those who oppose history (not by those who insert themselves into it, or even reshape it)” (Ibid, 2004 p. 326). This last sentence contains the justification which has driven this dissertation; that is, on the one hand, to prove to what extent social movements do – or as I have been referring to them during this dissertation - resistance movements – challenge (majoritarian) social theory’s analyses. On the other hand, by writing throughout this dissertation, I argue for the opposition to those majoritarian approaches. Majoritarian is understood here in the same sense as it is proposed by Deleuze and Guattari; this is the constant or standard that serves as a measure of a presupposed average which tends to be the white-heterosexual-(western)-male. Thus the “majority assumes a state of power and domination” (ibid, 2004 p. 116). In opposition to that, Deleuze and Guattari propose de function of minor authors, a model that is not the representational nor the “master” author; this is, it is not the speaks/thinking person on behalf of a group, nor it is someone isolated from the community possessing some sort of transcendental truth (Deleuze in Guattari in Thoburn, 2003 p. 30)

Although arguing against academic analysis within a PhD context might look contradictory, in placing these two arguments together I am aligning theoretical analyses and knowledge practices while presenting myself as a practitioner. Moreover, by introducing in chapter V the discussion regarding methodological practices, such as the feminist ones, this dissertation shows a more fluid view of social movement analyses where the knowledge produced on the ground is interchangeable with that of academia and vice versa. In other words, by demonstrating the porousness of social (movement) theory’s analyses, I propose re-thinking social theory itself from its margins. That is, writing from the position of someone between the academy (as a PhD candidate) and the field, whose position as a researcher is not entirely legitimised and, as an activist who, probably because of the conditions of being a researcher, will always remain a

little bit of an intruder. Thus, Deleuze's figure of the Smith is most appropriate in the sense that, as a researcher-activist I have to fluctuate from one strata-field to another, embedding in my passing the molecularity of that which I am experiencing. Being a woman is added to this experience not as a condition but as a point of departure embodied in my thinking process.

It is for all the reasons mentioned above that this dissertation has not only been directed to present how the case study proves, challenges or contradicts that which has been criticised here but, it provides a fairly exhaustive explanation of the underlying theories that support these criticisms. Accordingly, I have divided the analysis in two to parts; the first one, up to chapter V, refers back to the theoretical and analytical insights of social movement theories as well as arguing why it is essential to rethink social theory. I mainly focus on the ontological problematic of social analyses and highlight the importance of including feminist approaches in the scientific method. Classical scientific knowledge still presumes the neutrality of the researcher and thus, I argue, the distance which separates the object of study, and the researcher remains irreconcilable. Thus, social theory speaks from the object but without the object, becoming, in many cases a self-referential field. I claim social theory needs to reconnect back with the context which makes it possible.

Following the words of Deleuze and Guattari (2004) mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, those who analysed the '68 movement from an aseptic neutral position were not able to see that what escaped the presupposed conditions fleeing beyond their macropolitical point of view. They imply a comparable argument when referring to other historical phenomena such as the French Revolution (1789), the Paris Commune (1871) or Russian Revolution (1917):

“there is one part of the event that is irreducible to any social determinism, or to casual chains. Historians are not very fond of this point: they restore causality after the fact. Yet the event is itself a splitting off from a breaking with causality; it is a bifurcation, a lawless deviation, an unstable condition that opens up a new field of the possible”. (Deleuze and Guattari, 2001 p. 209)

In a similar fashion, theorists, as well as politicians, struggled to understand what it was that brought the 15-M together and what happened while nothing was



happening. Chapter II did not only introduced the problematic of social theory but also presented the 15-M as a reasonably well-known example of how this problematic unfolds when looking at current movements. However, does that mean that nothing else happens outside those events or situations? Even though when the 15-M is represented here as the visible part of those movements and, its contribution has been highly important in the Spanish context, I am more concerned with the space/time interrelations and practices that occur away from the media's eyes, along the apparently static impasse and which transformation capabilities affect people's day to day life. This is independent of any universalisation of outcomes or global transcendence. Going back to the analogy of the Paris Commune, members of the SI such Debord, Cotanyi and Vaneigen (n.d.), in his *Theses of the Paris Commune* (Thesis Eleven) state: "Theoreticians who examine the history of this movement from a divinely omniscient viewpoint (like that found in classical novels) can easily demonstrate that the Commune was objectively doomed to failure and could not have been successfully consummated. They forget that for those who really lived it, the consummation was already there." (Debord, Cotanyi and Vaneigen, n.d. thesis 11). It is for this reason that I introduce the case study of CB, occupying the rest of this work with its analysis. I present CB as a space of living revolution, which does not pretend to create models but whose practices change the life of those living them, away (for the moment) from the trap of analytical frameworks and result-led strategies into which other movements have already been assigned.

Consequently, the second part of this dissertation analyses my journey as an activist throughout the actions, events, practices and knowledges in which I have participated. Thus, I have examined CB, and its context, and what happens during the "impasse", what flows and escapes the eyes of those whose gaze does not reach to the micropolitics which defines society. In so doing, I analyse the transformations, transmutations of values and becomings occurring in the society which usually pass unnoticed by majoritarian approaches and hence justify this research.

However, that what flees traces a diagram, a new assemblage into another space and drives movement. The analyses of such fluidity require us to unthink the binary distributions and dualist debates from which our analyses stand to be able to re-think from the point of view of what flees. It is for this reason that chapter III is dedicated to decoding the rules of the scientific knowledge. That is to unthink

how it is that scientific knowledge seems to be the only legitimised way to represent social phenomena and has ultimately constructed the image of thought.

Scientific knowledge is based on the use of representative concepts which, as explained in chapter III, have been constructed on the bases of hierarchic ordering and dividing differences attempting to form objective and neutral identities. Thus, what matters is that what can be piled up according to categories and through mathematical methods. With the introduction of Descartes' dualism and mathematical thought supported by authors such as Leibniz, as well as Kant's philosophical argument on transcendentalism as the only way to reach truth, the separation of the subject from the object has been established as the only possibility for scientific knowledge to be recognised beyond experience.

Moreover, the construction of thought, as Deleuze in his work *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze, 2004) proves, comes from the point of view of the thinking subject who judges and measures that what can be said. That is the being point of view. But that what can be said, what constitutes legitimised knowledge is, at the same time, only said by western white male subjects. Thus, being only a particular point of view what is taken into account and ignoring what does not fit into the parameters of the subject. In this judgement, it is apparent, the subject-woman is not reflected or at best it has been presumed to be represented by that of the male.

Therefore, it makes sense for this dissertation to include the work of feminist theorists, as I do in chapter IV, who argue against representation imposed by the hetero-patriarchal domination of academic thought. Feminist theories, however, cannot be separated from the fact of being women and have developed from an epistemological and methodological position as women. Furthermore, feminist theorists embody womanhood within their ontological perspective hence offering a different philosophy which goes beyond traditional understandings. As feminist authors and transfeminists positions argue, this implies to reflect from a situated position problematising and forcing the deterritorialisation of hegemonic knowledge productions (Cabrera and Vargas Montroy, 2014 p. 27- 28). This means decolonising knowledge in the broader sense of the word, not only giving space to epistemologies of the south as Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006) puts it, but in Harding (1986) words, a successor science, another of the other (Irigaray, 1995). Gloria Anzaldua summarises it in the following words:

“Your identity is a filtering screen limiting your awareness to a fraction of your reality. What you and your cultures believe is provisional and depends on specific perspective. What your eyes, ears, and other physical sense perceive is not the whole picture, but one determined by your core beliefs and prevailing societal assumptions. What you live through and the knowledge you infer from experience is subjective. Intuitive knowing, unmediated by mental constructs – what inner eye, heart, and gut tell you – is the closest you come to direct knowledge (gnosis) of the world, and this experience of reality is partial too.” (Anzaldúa, 2002 p. 542)

In so doing, this research does not only embrace this view but, I claim, it provides a more inclusive and fluid account for the analysis of (urban) resistances in Barcelona.

Accordingly, as per Deleuze’s argument, I take the concept of difference as a positive stance and place it at the centre from which my ontological argument takes its departure. This does not only make it possible to talk of being and non-being as the same, but it makes it pointless, hence eliminating the point of view of the subject does not require the omnipresence of representation. (No)Being is then univocal since it is unique to everything and multiple because what can be said it can be done from all and anything. Identity, as explained in chapter III, is secondary to difference in the sense that, what passes from one becoming to another is difference and its multiplicities, hence the body is the site where that distribution takes place (Colebrook, 2000 p. 89). Consequently, the body acquires a political and ethical character as it has been well understood by the (trans)feminist theories expressed in chapter IV and V. However, as I will clarify further in this chapter, this political and ethical embodiment has also been transferred to resistance movements, symbolised by the constant will of putting life at the centre of their struggle as it has been mentioned several times during my participation in Can Batlló.

Social phenomena are then the result of the embedded relationships between differences and multiplicities. It is in this sense that I compare society to Deleuze and Guattari’s idea of the Body without Organs, where one can/should sense those differences, passions, desires and intensities which trace the creation of lines of flight and passages. The analysis of the case study carried out during this dissertation has been done with this idea in mind, looking at the

relations of those (an)organic elements that reach each other through multiple events, spaces and times. Henceforth, I have attempted to peel off the layers of those relationships and networks established within Barcelona as a city (chapter VI) and, which has undeniably brought me to look at its resistances and its urban development from which they flee. The neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc and, finally the autonomist practices taking place in CB (Chapter VII and VIII). In spite of all that, I do not deny molar relations between those multiplicities whose processes of deterritorialisation and reterritorisations will be explained later in this chapter.

Ultimately, from all the explanation above, it can be deduced that the understanding of the theory and the practices on the ground cannot come from the point of view of the intellectual anymore. A fluid and honest conversation between all the subjects and elements conforming any research is needed. This requires taking into account all produced knowledges, having into consideration first those shaping the ground itself. In the words of Chesters:

“If social scientists are to act ethically towards social movements and to treat them as knowledge-producers, social scientist are required to take account of the ontological frameworks movements in advance – the political imaginaries and alternative accounts of what might be possible within a given society” (Chesters, 2012 p. 148)

This brings us back to one of the questions the interviewee of La Ciutat Invisible (interviewee La Ciutat Inivisible, Barcelona 17/10/2014) asked me and, which could also be relevant to other researchers as well as my own. It is clear that I am endeavouring here to contribute with my little grain of sand to the field of academia by trying to bring together theory with epistemological approaches and resistance technologies into the same ground but, how is it that I contribute to resistance movements? Does academic knowledge matter in this case? Apart from contributing as a participant, how does my research affect their circumstances? Meaning that well-thought analysis, in the sense as I have explained here, informs the reader and researchers but do not change that what is going on the ground. Practices and actions take place independently from our contextualisation or work-frames because of their discursivity and fluidity of how decisions are taken. Thus, practices such as that of Guattari at La Borde help us to clarify specific processes, but it will never have the consistency to explain

change materially as it cannot contain the immanence of the emotions and desires that inspire those transformations and those becomings. It is for this reason that Guattari did not pretend to create a model but diagrams which sometimes “throws out a line, like a new eye on a potato” (Genosko, 2009 p. 60) into that abstract machine which drives it. Thus, I could only answer that it is required for someone to step aside, slow down and reflect on what is being constructed, accompanying that process without representing or assuming any leadership, instead, just for the sake of reclaiming the knowledge of what is ours, beyond any academic branding. Therefore, as Spivak reminds us while answering a question regarding post-structuralist authors, “we must know the limits of the narratives, rather than establish the narratives as solution for the future, for the arrival of social justice, so that to an extent they (the post-structuralist) are working within an understanding of what they can do, rather than declaring war.” (Spivak, 1990 p.19).

#### *The importance of disqualified knowledges in social theory research*

I have been appealing here for the importance of taking into account those knowledges-practices produced on the ground, those who embody the struggles that researchers are so keen to comment on despite being quickly dismissed due to their lack of scientific systematisation, consistency, etc. The arguments regarding the failures of scientific analyses to provide such an account have been extensively discussed during the first chapters of this dissertation although they have by no means been exhausted. The debates regarding the construction of scientific knowledge have been widely explored in contemporary philosophy and especially among feminist approaches (chapter IV). The discussion between the type of knowledge and the limitations of academic knowledge is not new. I have pointed out at several authors justifying this criticism and among them Michael Burawoy (2005). He has made an extensive classification of the types of knowledges and relations of power within the field of sociology. Thus, he distinguishes between professional, critical, policy and public knowledge. His work is a strong defence of public sociology “ready to embark on a systematic back-translation, taking knowledge back to those from whom it came” (Burawoy, 2005 p. 5). So, he takes into account, instrumental and reflexive approaches and whether is directed to an academic or a non-academic audience. Despite his emphasis on elaborating categories that apply to many deviations and positions that well could be applied to the analysis of social movements, my interests focus

on problematising rather than finding classifications. On another hand, I am very aware that academic writing such as these here leaves behind other epistemologies which are not founded on written words but in the performativity of actions and representations. Such is the idea of a sociology of the image defended by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui which she develops drawing from his experience of Taller de Historia Oral Andina (THOA, Andean Oral History Worksop) (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2015). Hence, instead of classifying, naming and ordering, this dissertation is concerned with, using Foucault's words, the insurrections of (subjugated) knowledges as those that have been "buried and disguised in a functionalist coherence or formal systematisation" (Foucault, 1980 p.81).

Henceforth, it seems worth recalling, once again, those knowledge precepts that have motivated the choice of authors, theories and approaches during this research. Foucault calls those, "subjugated knowledges" (Foucault 1980 p. 82) although in this dissertation I have also been using the term "minor authors" from Deleuze and Guattari (2004), as well as "situated knowledges" from Donna Haraway (1988). All of them refer to those knowledges and authors whose epistemologies are pushed to the margins of "scientific" approaches and, whose discourses speak from the position of the excluded. In this thesis' argument, each of these terms complements each other.

Thus, Foucault argues "subjugated knowledges are thus those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematising theory and which criticism - which obviously draws upon scholarship- has been able to reveal" (Foucault, 1980 p. 82). Deleuze and Guattari refer to minor authors as those who use a majoritarian language in order to become minor; this is to extract that part of language which has the potential to deterritorialise from the majoritarian one and create a minority (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 116 -118). As already explained in chapter III and IV, becoming-minoritarian is for these authors, either "by excess or default" of repetition of difference, key to movement and the liberation of language and by default knowledge, from the representative majority. Minor literature is then the affirmation of difference, "it is not a synthesis" of identities but excess and "an amplification of disjunctions". It continues, "it creates a milieu or a collectivity that emerges not through a unity, but through the reconfiguration of differences" (Thoburn, 2003 p.27) The figure of minoritarian, Deleuze and Guattari argue,

speaks to power in another sense than that of domination; this is power as potential or puissance (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 116 - 118) to become other than majority and in that sense it becomes political. For this reason, I have related power to resistance in chapter III, hence to become minoritarian is to resist, not as a reactive but a proactive act of creativity which might turn in to movement or not.

The act of resisting in the sense of *potentia* is clearly embodied by the feminism's questioning of science and the development of feminist theory in itself, as I have argued along chapter IV. Donna Haraway focuses this criticism on the "illusion" of objectivity and hence, on the neutrality that scientific representative knowledge assumes. She argues such objectivity has been constructed from the white hetero-patriarchal point of view. As an alternative she posits a feminist objectivity of the "we" referring to those "embodied others who are *not* allowed not to have a body, a finite point of view, and so an inevitable disqualifying and pollution bias in any discussion of consequence outside our own little circles, where a "mass"-subscription journal might reach a few thousand readers composed mostly of science haters" (Haraway, 1988 p. 575) This embodied objectivity is openly recognised to be partial as Haraway rejects the idea of a totalizing science capable of providing a whole explanation of the world. In the same way, she discards relativism's position of equidistance. Thus, it is this feminist objectivity that she calls "situated knowledges" (Haraway, 1988).

Consequently, this research feeds as much from academic approaches as from activist ones and all those authors positioned in between but I give special attention to those who tell their own story being aware that I am also telling mine even if it is presented under scientific precepts. For these reasons, despite the theoretical foundation of this research, once coming to the narratives of those resistances of the ground I rely on authors who were/are activists. Thus, I go back to local and **autonomous** newspapers such as *La Directa* or *La Burxa*, cite from books such as *Epistemes, fricciones y flujos* or those co-written published by collectives a priori disparate such as the cooperative of architects LaCol and the publishing/(Social Movements) Research Centre La Ciutat Invisible. I could provide further quotations; however, all this data has already been mentioned in chapter V. Yet, what I am willing to highlight here is the fact that all these works which have constituted a strong base for my research and have also been conducted by the protagonist of the narrative which is explained. This narrative

comes from the margins, it is narrated by the margins, and it is not intended for well-known peer-reviewed journals, nor does it intend to make big assumptions about the true cause of social action or what underlies the social, but to expand and share their epistemologies among those who also produce them. Resistance knowledges have, at the same time, their own distribution channels which I have cited here several times. I have mentioned here the work done by publishing cooperatives such as La Ciutat Invisible, Pol·len (within Espai Contrabandos), Descontrol (in CB), etc. All of them, not only publish, produce and distribute knowledges created from minor positions (among others) but also support and put into practice processes which break with the market system imposed on their sector.

Consequently, those knowledges created by resistance movements in Barcelona are not only remarkably linked to their collective memory as discussed in previous chapters but to their capacity of networking and continuous feedback with other collectives, cooperatives and autonomous spaces. Examples of that can be found in the journeys narrated in Chapter VI regarding Barcelona's urbanisms, but also other collaborations and workshops with other collectives in in Barcelona or in the Spanish state; or, welcoming visits from collectives in other countries; participating in interviews, documentaries, as well as providing space for activities of other projects. The channels of communication and knowledge exchange are multiple. Other examples can be found on the collective production of documents and materials we tend to share, such as the gender table which was distributed to different groups and collectives; or the production of an evaluation document of each collective which has helped to justify the activity of CB in favour of the negotiations for the future lease agreement. It is also worth to highlight that there are several books and documents, as mentioned above which have been written and edited by members of CB. Finally, it cannot be forgotten that one of the conditions to be a project of CB is the social return to the neighbourhood. For this reason, there is also a variety of free workshops, activities from conferences, visual arts, sawing and English groups, adult education courses, yoga, meditations, etc. all of them suggest a flow of knowledges which go beyond the formal understandings.

Academia, on the other hand, can draw (or not) from it but this so-called "minor science" does not need the systematisation, representationalism and legitimisation of "royal science" as Deleuze and Guattari named it in order to exist



(Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 398 -406). They point out that “Minor science is continually enriching major science, communicating its intuition to it, its way of proceeding, its itinerancy, its sense of and taste for matter, singularity, variation, intuitionist, geometry and the numbering number.” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p 535)

#### *A call for feminist methodologies*

Following Haraway once again, one is confronted with some unavoidable questions: “How one should be positioned in order to see, in this situation of tensions, resonances, transformations, resistances, and complicities?” (Haraway, 1988 p. 588). In other words, what are the rules (if any) that one needs to follow when presenting such an approach? Which should be the scientific guidelines supporting it? And, what should be the position for the researcher to take? During chapter V, I have presented the how and why of my methodological proposal as well as the limitations I have encountered. I argue that the most honest manner is to speak for oneself in the position in which is encountered at the moment of speaking at the risk of being dismissed, being branded out as trivial or minor. And then, if authors such as Audre Lorde rightly argue “the Master’s tools will never dismantle the Master’s house” (Lorde, 1984), one must invent new tools, practices and technologies which provide a new legitimisation for minor approaches and dismantle the castle built by the general male-dominated knowledges. Therefore, as Deleuze and Guattari point out, one needs to embrace the apparent banality of minority, resignify and re-symbolise its resistance from the point of view of a practitioner, the “art of doing” in Certeau’s (1984) words.

What should then be the role of minority knowledges as for asserting the power of the multitudes in front of the majority? A researchers’ duty is to translate this power while respecting as much as possible the nomadic flows which are unravelled by it. Following the criticisms of social theory developed during this dissertation and, since I have already established that I have not aimed to provide a complete and neutral account of urban resistance movements in Barcelona, I have looked into methodological approaches which empathise with the ontological perspective proposed along the lines of this work. In this sense, as mentioned several times, the boundaries between ontology, epistemology as well as the methodology used in this research are meant to be interwoven. The

different views in which I have perceived the object are both rooted in my own learning process as a PhD candidate and as a practitioner on the ground. So it seemed to me that constructing a narrative based on my own autoethnographic wandering through the research process establishes a more transparent relationship between the subject/object. Maria PTQP (Maria PTQK, 2013) relates this form of knowledge to the construction of the concept of Public Amateur of Claire Pentecost (Pentecost, 18/01/2009). Although this concept refers mostly to artistic expressions for which the non-legitimated (non-specialised) public designates itself and assumes the active position producer and interpreter of knowledge, it can also be applied to the interpretation of resistance movements. In other words, resistance technologies on the ground assume their capacities to challenge legitimated knowledges while doing and thus, becoming a subject of power. It could then be said that I am assuming, in this case, the role of the public amateur in opposition to the voyeurism of social theory.

### **Can Batlló's rhizomatic relations**

It has been argued throughout this dissertation that current resistances collectives in Barcelona cannot be contained or ordered into a set of relational rules, patterns and hierarchies through which they can be explained. Instead, they are distributed in horizontal and self-assembling dimensions characterised by an anarchic sense of order. In other words, current resistance movements are built upon rhizomatic relations constituted as a web-diagram for which classical social movements' epistemologies are not able to provide an account. Even if CB is highly organised and, has a stable structure and a transparent decision process, this has been decided as it evolved during all these years. Currently, CB is the consequence of the resignification of a space which already had a symbolic content and was/is embedded into the history of the neighbourhood as it was explained in chapter VI. The occupation of CB was the result of the neighbours' will to administrate their resources after years of failed negotiations. It was the result of people turning words into actions, the result of many years of bringing practices and knowledge into resistances, the result of cooperations and constructions of relationships of those belonging to multiple, different and, occasionally, antagonist resistances but who know they must take ownership of their struggle in order to succeed. Thus, I suspect that CB's achievements, even

if it cannot be enumerated into definitive cause-effects variables, is a bit more than a lucky “alignment of the stars with the sun” as one of the interviewees mentioned (interviewee economy commission, Barcelona 24/03/2014). CB is a success because in it are reflected the efforts of a neighbourhood regardless of their political ideology and individual interests.

Accordingly, heterogeneity is one of the first principles of rhizomatic relations accomplished by CB. I have mentioned on several occasions that the different backgrounds, ages and diversities of CB’s projects are one of its primary assets (and occasionally limitations). So there the participation age spans from 20 and 80 years old but, in addition to that, there are loads of activities and projects such as La Nau or the Arcadia school in which the focus lies on little people. Likewise, I have explained how there are projects as diverse as the arts, circus, climbing, gardening, publishing, library, carpentry, housing cooperatives, etc. As figure 5 shows, CB’s global project tries to reach every aspect of what a neighbourhood requires. I have already commented that people come from different educational backgrounds and social classes as well as having different political views. Thus, some members come from anarchist libertarian movements, others come from squat and autonomist movements, from syndicalism movements, those related to neighbourhood associations, those who might support some political parties, or those who do not hold any a particular political affinity, etc. In fact, the heterogeneity of CB has been highlighted as an asset in each interview I have conducted with no exception. It is the same for the idea of connection; most of CB members participate in other projects and groups outside of CB. At the same time, many other collectives from Barcelona or the Spanish State organise their activities in CB, or CB’s members participate in other spaces for which there is a constant flow of knowledge exchange and cooperation. Not only that, the negotiation commission is unremittingly in conversation with the institutions in order to assure the needs of CB are met and, in so doing CB permeates (or tries to) every aspect of its political (formal and informal) and social environment.

The principle of multiplicity, argued by Deleuze and Guattari, occurs “when the multiplicity is effectively treated as a substantive, “multiplicity” that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 8- 9). CB in this sense is a physical space composed of several warehouses and buildings, it is a global project which accommodates 32 projects, and it is linked to the past as per its

socio-political history. In conclusion, CB, which I have been personalising as a single entity, has multiple layers and dimensions which can be split into many others, none of them is central but at a given moment. These multiplicities constitute the “nerve fibres” of CB which are connected to other multiplicities, dimensions and contexts founding a new multiplicity anywhere else. Thus, CB is connected to its socio-historical process as it is linked to Sants and Barcelona and other similar projects in the Spanish state. Its projects are also compared to others in the same way. That is to say, CB is not the central point responsible for the existence of any of these dimensions, but it is interwoven with all these layers.

A third characteristic is related to what Deleuze and Guattari call “the principle of assignifying rupture” (Ibid) for which a rhizome when “broken, shattered at a given spot” will resume/become within its old dimension or on a new one. This is because of the connections and lines of flight that each multiplicity has with others and because each of them reflects the whole in each element. In the case of CB, this is reflected in the sense that all its members/projects rotate with the different processes. Everybody participates in the decision-making processes, the activities, the many working commissions, cleaning, etc. Thus, everybody acquires similar knowledges about the organisation, structure and decision-processes that take place. At the same time, each project has its own decision processes which are similar or the same to those of CB. If at some point a project disappears CB would not stop existing. Likewise, if CB stops existing the project could continue autonomously in a different space. Nevertheless, CB also contains elements which with time are becoming stratified and territorialised as it could be the some of the decision-process aspects such as the coordination or the general assembly; on the other hand, the projects and people’s mobility constitute those lines of deterritorialisation which are in constant change.

Ultimately, a rhizomatic relation needs to follow a cartographic and decalcomania principle (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 13 -17). That means those relations should be mapped not traced (Ibid, 2004 p. 13), should not represent a generic model or deep structure of action or way of acting. In other words, CB should not aim to be a representative model but to negotiated and constantly linking together with other collectives and networks, creating but not created. The last question I posted to the interviewees give a clearer vision of this principle (see last section of chapter VIII), when I asked regarding CB’s future most of the interviewees would like CB to be an example, not followed blindly as a given

guideline. Rather, they see themselves sharing its processes and practices albeit adapting to each context. As I have mentioned previously in chapter VIII, there is a constant exchange of acquired experiences among similar projects and CB is one of them. In other words, CB does not aim to represent as it is in constant change itself. CB is a map in the sense that it establishes connections between different dimensions of the social body and it can be analysed from multiple ways as the methodology of this dissertation has clarified but does not aim to be a manual.

### **From CB's nomadic theory to Barcelona's BwO**

Currently, CB forms a body, a synergy of knowledges, practices, ideas, intensities and experiences which work together towards the construction of other possibilities different from those offered by the marketisation of society. As explained in the previous section rhizomatic relations tend to be horizontal, non-hierarchical, heterogenic, multiple, as well avoiding representing but creating by doing and in that sense, it seems to be clear that the idea of difference is central to those principles. It is in that sense that CB embraces these principles as a project. Not only that, the concept of transformation privileging change, movement and knowledge exchange is at the core of CB's project. These are, also some of the characteristics for Braidotti's (2011) idea of nomadic theory as a model that tries to prioritise the (de)constructing of established manners of doing by continually reviewing its processes and inventing new problems (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004).

Although at the beginning of my research I thought the concept of nomadic might be generalisable to the whole of CB, I had to take into account that some of the members prioritise the idea of social/political/economic stability and structure. While open to change, collective construction and creativity, many of CB's participants do not put the concept of nomad at the centre. Following Braidotti's idea, nomad relates to movement and change as well as the ability to problematise placed at the centre of one's thought and personal and collective transformation (albeit this might be intrinsic to the sole existence). In any case, this is something that has not been discussed openly in those terms. In the end, CB does have the will and the capacity and potential for change with its context. Since there rarely exists a homogenous opinion regarding anything; CB is unceasingly challenging and redefining itself. For example, as I have been

explaining in the decision-making process, there will always be opinions contesting each point.

In a word, nomadic thinking or not might depend more on individuals than on the global and structural aspects of CB. That is because, on the one hand, individuals fluctuate not only within CB but also within projects in and outside CB and; on the other hand, because CB is embedded within the context of the neighbourhood, the city and other resistances movements which are also fluid hence, modifying the society every time. Nomadic movement, I argue, is then more dependent on individuals while the idea of the rhizome can be applied to the relationships that are developed between resistance collectives. Henceforth, I encounter that CB has been the result of many processes of de- and reterritorialisation. Deleuze and Guattari argue: "A molecular flow was escaping, minuscule at first, then swelling, without, however, ceasing to be unassignable. The reverse, however, is also true: molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organisations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions of sexes, classes, and parties." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 238). As I explained in the last section of chapter VI, CB was constructed in 1878 in the centre of La Bordeta as a textile mill. Later on, during Franco's coup d'état (17th July 1936) it was self-managed by the workers until Julio Muñoz bought it in 1943 and finally, divided into 700 small business in 1964 until it went bankrupt in 1986. During all its history CB has been re-shaped multiple times, but it always remained a symbol, a city within the city with its own internal dynamics. Then the neighbours occupied it and gave CB a new life as a mark of change. It is in this sense that CB transverses time in a Bergsonian manner, in the sense of duration, the present occurring while the past is still there as it has never ceased to exist (Deleuze, 1988 p. 59). One could argue that CB exists because of the building or space in which those projects are contained. That, I think, is only superficially true, as the idea of CB and the first seeds existed in its relations, the people that worked on its premises and the neighbours that shaped CB's platform even before it was occupied. The same can be argued of many other collectives in Barcelona, such as the case of Espai Germanetes which is a collective of neighbours who occupy the empty area of what used to be a convent. Thus, on these occasions, spaces of virtuality or space of imagination pre-exist the physical space. However, this virtuality does not make them less real.

CB becomes then an assemblage formed by a heterogeneity of elements and relationships in a continued flow of territorialisation and deterritorialisation distributed around a body of resistances. However, CB in itself also serves as a body in the sense that in it welcomes other projects-assemblages. Those relations constitute a self-forming mechanism (assemblage machine) which technologies, synergies and dynamics move in between the strata of capitalist society; the overcodified machine and the abstract machine in the plane of consistency. The concept of assemblage machine cannot be understood as isolated since it interacts with other machines. Therefore, once again, it is necessary to highlight Deleuze and Guattari's words about this concept:

“There are different types of abstract machines that overlap in their operations and qualify the assemblages: abstract machines of consistency, singular and mutant, with multiplied connections; abstract machines of stratification that surround the plane of consistency with another plane; and axiomatic or overcoding abstract machines that perform totalizations, homogenisations, conjunctions of closure. Every abstract machine is linked to other abstract machines, not only because they are inseparably political, economic, scientific, artistic, ecological, cosmic- perceptive, affective, active, thinking, physical, and semiotic – but because their various types are as intertwined as their operations are convergent. Mechanosphere.” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 566)

Resistances collectives in Barcelona form a diagram of assemblages with the plane of consistencies which reterritorialise towards the interior, meanwhile creating passages and deterritorialising toward the exterior. Thus, assemblage machines connect on the one hand with the codified strata and on the other with the map(s) or diagrams of the abstract machines. The true abstract machine tends to positive deterritorialisation; hence it does not make any distinction between its elements since they are horizontally distributed along the smooth space of the plane of consistency. In so doing, a flow is created which becomes rhizomatic and traverses all mechanistic stages until disappearing with the BWO. The plane of consistency is then a BWO. That is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, “not a notion but a practice” (Ibid, 2004 p. 166) through which only intensities can pass (Ibid, 2004 p. 169). Consequently, the plane of consistency

puts in relation and is then composed by those intensities and desires which those authors call plane of immanence and the assemblages interrupting the flow of intensities. Desire, as has been highlighted in chapter III, refers to that what drives and creates movement without reference to anything else but itself.

I have utilised the idea of the BWO as a tool, as the lens through which to look at the social in order to discern what differs beyond the eyes of the legitimising scientific method. In this, I have looked at resistance movements, not in terms of their form, predetermined concepts and conditions, but their relationships, processes and interbedded complexities. In so doing, I have positioned myself at as a researcher, participant and woman at the centre of the analyses not so much as the subject point of view but as per Haraway's argument as body medium, a feminist subject, through which to envision this research. Subsequently, I have constructed a diagram; a map of assemblages and, resistances through which I am able to explain this case study while challenging majoritarian approaches to social phenomena. I speak thus of CB, Sants-Montjuïc and Barcelona as BwO but in so doing, I am aware that the full BwO cannot be reached. However, as it has been claimed in *A Thousand Plateaus*:

"People ask, So what is this BwO? - But you are already in it, scurrying like a vermin, groping like a blind person, or running like a lunatic: desert traveller and nomad of the steppes. On it we sleep, live our walking lives, fight – fight and are fought – seek our place, experience untold happiness and fabulous defeats; on it we penetrate and are penetrated; on it we love." (Ibid)

Barcelona's current resistances movements are thus embodied within a BwO, a passage of intensities and multiple plateaus on a plane of immanence which is at the same time in relation with other plateaus on a plane of consistency. As it has been shown in one of the sections of chapter III, Foucault understands power not so much as possession but as circuit, a set of military tactics and methods which migrate or transit bodies (in its broadest sense) not without encountering resistances, fractures and situations which disrupt those power mechanisms and constitute, at the same time, their own circuit (Foucault, 2003 p. 33-35). However, this web of resistances is not known a priori, and their relations are essentially different to that from power, meaning that they are not hierarchically distributed but anarchic and nomadic. Since one cannot separate power from its resistances,



this becomes an opportunity for transformation by reversing the attention into the mechanism of these resistances. That is the affirmation of resistances and thus, *potentia*. Accordingly, to resist in its positive sense is understood more as the creative flow which overcomes power domination: to resist is an art of living beyond surviving. The next section presents how this embeddedness is manifested within urban resistances based on my own research experience.

### **The embodiment of resistances**

Throughout Chapter VII and VIII I have described and analysed the qualities of CB's internal and external relations, between themselves, the neighbourhood, and Barcelona. Those relations are on many occasions antagonistic, this is the case with the negotiations with the district, the events during the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 or the actions in relations to Can Vies' eviction process. However, even within this form of antagonism, CB's relationship and processes go one step further, not only denouncing through direct actions but proposing creative means to oppose and construct methodologies of contestation which go beyond the obvious interpretation of the event/action/plateau, hence leaving the question of antagonism in a second plane. The affirmation of those resistances implies the existence of diagrams connecting assemblages and network relations which surpass the situation. These relations become more relevant because of the transformative capacity they have within the micropolitics of everyday life. In other words, they bring the politics of resistance into the plane of consistency where resisting is neither a reaction nor an accident or a deviation but something creative and artistic, since it needs to be performed. Caygill (2013, p. 174) relates the concept of resistance to the politics of everyday life of the SI. In Raoul Vaneigem words: "People who talk about revolution and class struggle without referring explicitly to everyday life, without understanding what is subversive about love and what is positive in the refusal of constraints – such people have a corpse in their mouth" (Raoul Vaneigem, 2006 p. 26) . During my fieldwork, I have encountered the relationship between politics, resistance and life on multiple occasions, summarised with the expression of "putting life at the centre". There is a conscious acknowledgement of the biopolitics of life but also the possibilities of its resistances. That was the case, for example, of the main argument that members of La Base maintained during the discussions regarding activisms and

the city that took place in May 2014.

Consequently, resistance movements do not aim at a totalisation of their struggles but to transform and change the context which affects them while also having an eye on the global context. In other words, it is by reinventing, resignifying and (de)reterritorializing the contexts they inhabit that they construct new and more autonomous milieus. As a result, concepts of self-management and autonomous ideas have accompanied this research. Self-management tending is one of the conditions which projects need to accomplish to be part of CB but, also appears in its internal regulations as a global project. The same goes, for many other projects outside CB, whether in Barcelona or whether in the Spanish state. There are increasing awareness and a will for maintaining official institutions outside of any intromission in their decision processes. Thus even if they receive economic help from the government – this is being a highly criticised point among many collectives, CB is one of them –, no interferences in the decision processes or economic management are accepted. For example, collectives such as Ateneu Popular de 9 Barris, which have been working for more than 40 years and is subsidised with public funds, does not allow those funds to exceed 50% of their budget. Consequently, the principle of autonomy is not only a reminiscence of past struggles and ideas, which by the way, was also not taken into account by social theories at that time but it is once again a reality shared by many of the collectives.

The same goes, as expressed in chapter VIII, for the principle of cooperation and exchange of knowledges. That occurs among projects in Barcelona but also across the Spanish state and Europe. For example, I have participated in roundtables (as a CB's member) in Barcelona, Valencia and Madrid; other colleagues have been in Bilbao, Zaragoza, Pamplona, Milan, etc. But we have also received visits from Berlin, Hamburg, and as far away as Montreal. Consequently, even if resistance collectives and projects get together on the bases of their affinities, the reality of their local and global context goes far beyond this, not only because of their need for cooperation and exchange of knowledge but, because as we have seen in the case of CB, it is rare that members participate exclusively in one collective. There is a general spirit of poly-activism which drives people's desires in multiple directions. Affinity is understood in a broader sense rather than a feeling of identity with a particular collective or another. As some of the interviews have confirmed on many occasions

(interviewee CB member, Barcelona 27/02/2014; interviewee LaCol, Barcelona 20/03/2014), it is friendships what have brought people together, either previous to the construction of the collectives, during or after.

In a similar fashion, resistance collectives in Barcelona acknowledge their need to be more inclusive with those who share the space with them and co-habit the margins of the city. This has been expressed by some of the interviewees such as the one of La Borda and the Carpentry (interviewee La Borda and Carpentry, Barcelona 03/05/2016) when speaking about CB's intellectualism, as well as by the general recognition of the multiple points of views and differences within CB (chapter VII). Likewise, during the workshop discussed in chapter VI, participants also recognised the fact that activism must go beyond ghettoisation and be more inclusive in their spaces. In so doing, their struggle needs to be directed towards the constructions of alternatives unrolling through the flaws of capitalism which homogenise society in opposition to the minority left behind. One has then, to break outside the straitjacket and become that minority on the margins in order to apprehend the transformation sought. It is in this sense that feminist approaches relate to resistance movements here. They not only claim and denounce the hetero-patriarchal society but, because of their own evolution as a field, propose epistemologies which are more in contact with the ground and their being as a body. As expressed in chapter IV and V, they embrace Deleuze's idea of the body as a flow of intensities and desires which acts as a medium of transformations. Consequently, putting one's life at the centre of resistance movements implies the embodiment of resistances. That is, as feminist theories have argued for years, situating oneself at the centre of the struggle, becoming minor as an active element of transformation and transversality. That means to feminise resistances. The body becomes a medium, an aggregation of experiences intensities, desires and also scars, capable of affecting, of transforming power flows into resistances' possibilities. The feminisation of resistance movements and why not, the study of those should be an essential part for change-becoming to take place.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to reflect back on the many ideas and theoretical approaches expressed in this dissertation and align them with the outcomes and impressions experienced from the case study. Based on my readings of the work

of Deleuze and Guattari (2004), I have brought together the different arguments which I have maintained in this research. It seems to me there are two main arguments to be highlighted here which underpin this chapter. The first is the discussion regarding the legitimisation of scientific knowledge, including, among this, the question of “who” sustains this legitimisation. I have clarified not only what is my ontological stance in these analyses but also the epistemological position I have defended during this dissertation. Likewise, I have stressed what my contribution to the field of social sciences is as well as the importance of opening the conversation of social science with other minor knowledges and practices on the ground hence, dismissing the representative stand taken by legitimised knowledges.

The second argument in this chapter discusses how the rhizomatic form that current resistances movements take challenges the approach of social theory to the analysis of those movements. For this reason, I go back to the work of Deleuze and Guattari and the BwO, which has served as a reference tool to envision current resistance movements in Barcelona as part of a plane of immanence moved by passions, intensities and desires instead of instrumentalist and rationalist judgments. CB’s rhizomatic relationships from within and without have been here revised and illustrated as one of the reasons for which academia struggles to provide an account for current resistances. In so doing, I have not only shown how resistance technologies disrupt classical analyses, while introducing the idea of the embodiment of those resistances by recalling the most frequently mentioned concepts during my fieldwork participation.

In conclusion, the first section discusses and reflects on the concept of knowledge and its legitimisation as well as the importance of rethinking social theory from the position of feminist epistemologies as a way to break with the domination of the western hetero-patriarchal point of view in science. The second section proves how these approaches are already being defied on the ground by putting relationships, affections and life at the centre of the struggle. Therefore, I do not only consider that resistance movements challenge social theory, but they also respond by embodying resistance within everyday micropolitics.

## X. CONCLUSION

This research has intended to go beyond a sole analysis of what resistance movements have in common. That is to say, overcoming what homogenises and standardises observations in order to present them later in front of self-concerned intellectuals or in a peer-reviewed journal according to coherently organised patterns through which to analyse other social phenomena. I have proven here how resistance collectives in Barcelona construct webbed networks of relationships and practices which challenge majoritarian social theories. Moreover, and more importantly, these movements experiment and construct creative ways of viewing, living and acting, while transforming values and subjectivities. These knowledges and practices trespass barriers without caring about the consequences or interpretations that this represents for social theory analyses. Thus, the prefix trans- as in “in transit” which I have borrowed from feminist approaches is not only an expression to describe something in process, but a state of being within those movements, a state of becoming body which can only be perceived when looking at difference per se instead of functioning patterns of categories. Perhaps this is what Deleuze and Guattari referred to by titling their work *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004) as the most honest way to perceive the social since it requires living on a perpetual non-form at the edge of simulacra (Deleuze, 2004) in opposition to the overcoded biopolitics of society. This means, to accept and embody the flow of the nomadic movement.

Foucault’s idea of ‘enlightenment’, understood as “an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them” (Foucault in Rabinow, 1984, p. 49) embraces how resistance movements understand their role as moving beyond a mere reaction against power domination to become producers of alternatives for everyday resistances. In that sense, *Collectivo Situaciones* refers to those “new protagonisms” mentioned in chapter II, as an “ethical action” which, being restricted by the “space of the situation,” is responsible for emancipation from biopolitical networks (*Collectivo Situaciones*, 2002, p. 38). These new protagonisms then link mobilisation to ethics and knowledge production. Hence, social theory analysis is tied to “the ethics of knowledge” as well as “to the

concrete forms of existence” (Colectivo Situaciones, p. 25) and therefore of resistance. Thus, current resistance movements cannot be detached from knowledge production and ethics as they are interwoven with a particular way of life which is in opposition to that of capitalist society.

In relation to this, there is a concept which has been repeated many times through the text, but which has also come from the mouths of many interviewees, random conversations, pamphlets, texts, posters, etc. This refers to the ideas, verbs and nouns related to the creation of cloth, textile, fabric, fibres, tissue, etc. Deleuze and Guattari use the idea of textile as a metaphor between the smooth and the striated space (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004 p. 475 – 477). A piece of fabric, an embroidery, a quilt, patchwork or the multiple examples of how indigenous cultures across the world tell their story through the art of sewing justifies the use of this metaphor. The word in Catalan *teixit* refers not only to a piece of fabric but weaving when used as a verb and also tissue, which in biology determines a degree of association between the cell and the organ. In Catalan (less so in Spanish), this same meaning of tissue is also used to denote a degree in which assemblages are organised/distributed along a similar plane of affinities and, in this sense, it refers to a network. It can thus be spoken of as “resistance tissue”, “association tissue”, etc. *Teixit* or tissue in English attains the sense of living matter which function is to constitute a resistance of interweaved affinities. This is altogether the expression of the interconnectivity between resistance movements with themselves, activists, and networks as well as the spaces they inhabit and their narratives. Resistance is not understood in the sense of resilience responding to an external input but as a living being, an intrinsic movement which threads, adds and expands differences to its network.

It is in this sense that it is said current resistance movements operate horizontally instead of antagonistically. Richard Day argues that the “most interesting thing about contemporary radical activism is that some groups are breaking out of this trap by operating non-hegemonically rather than counter-hegemonically” (Day, 2005, p. 8-9). Thus, they break with the concept of hegemony developed by Gramsci. Collaboration among activist and collectives is essential for current resistance movements, but this cannot be quantified or be tied to identities and fixed concepts. As has been expressed many times in this dissertation, resistance movements are characterised by rhizomatic relations which are in a process of constant (de)territorialisation. CB and the

neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc which I have analysed in chapter VI, VII and VIII is only an example of this: while the context differs from all the others, at the same time it becomes a path or a map for many others. As expressed in the first chapters of this dissertation (chapter II and III), it is this nomadic and rhizomatic form, in opposition to the arboreal form on which scientific analysis is based, that makes the comprehension of current resistances difficult. For this reason, a big part of this dissertation has been dedicated to exploring the problematic of classical scientific analyses and their ontological genealogy, while the second part has focused on current urban resistances and their knowledge constructions, more specifically in CB. The next paragraphs in this chapter will summarise and put in relation these big blocks, while the last part of this chapter is dedicated to reflections regarding the limitations I have encountered during this analysis, as well as my suggestions for future research on this topic.

### **Research genesis**

While chapter I is dedicated to introducing the reader to the topic of this research, chapter II focuses on presenting the problematic of classical social theory as well as introducing those theoretical approaches and current movements which challenge classical analyses. I argue there is a general eagerness for codifying social action into operable categories capable of providing a simplified explanation of social phenomena. From rationality models such as Olson's (1965), RMT theories of McCarthy and Zald (1977) or Klandermans (1984), to Tilly's (1978) solidarity models, the analyses of macro and cultural elements, new social movement's theories as well as structuralist/agency debates, majoritarian authors look for representational models which generally objectify the subjects of study and create a hierarchical relationship between them. These authors tend to assume a series of *sine qua non* preconditions in order for a (social) movement to exist. Such conditions not only have to pre-exist the movement, but the subjects must also have a pre-existing idea of the "we" as an identity and have constructed a cost-benefits strategy in order to become a movement. What is most striking about these positions is that they do not take into account what happens on the ground (Donatella della Porta, 2013). In the best-case scenario, debates remain trapped in a discussion between structuralist and agency bias.

However, it is also true that this criticism has been acknowledged by authors such as Melucci (1989, 1996), Giddens (1984), Habermas (1976, 1985)

and others. These authors tried to reconcile structure and agency perspectives and although they might have been relatively successful at breaking with this duality, they still rely on rationalistic views based on the organisation of behavioural patterns between the object and the subject. Although these approaches try to bridge the gap between ontological and epistemological views (Chesters, 2012), their analysis still relies on an outside position, judging what a worthy knowledge is or not. On the other hand, post-structuralist and post-materialist approaches have recognised this criticism and focus their work on going beyond the power structures of scientific knowledge. The work of authors such as Foucault (1981, 1995, 2002, 2003), Deleuze and Guattari (2004) (Deleuze, 2003, 2004) and especially feminist theorists, such as Braidotti (1991, 1993, 2011a, 2011b) or Haraway (1988, 1997) clearly have an anti-representationalist character which challenges the role of the intellectual (western white-male-heterosexual in the case of feminist theorists) as a standard measure for social theoretical analyses. Instead, it is argued for ethically informed analyses focusing on movement and change which I claim provide a better account of current resistances movements.

Consequently, the second part of chapter II recalls how knowledge-practices on the ground construct their own epistemologies. I have drawn examples from Latin America such as the Argentinian Crisis in 2001 and have presented the context that brought the 15-M movement before the Spanish State. I have briefly analysed the transformation of values that support these movements and how it has influenced future movements. Finally, I introduce the reason for which the analysis of this research case study is important. That is, CB is the result of many years through which a neighbourhood has struggled. This struggle was undoubtedly reinforced by the events of the 15-M but also existed before, during and after that movement. CB and Barcelona's resistance movements are regarded as having a strong autonomous character with their own internal technologies and methods of knowledge production and distribution.

The above-mentioned focus on the criticism of scientific knowledge production is such a central part of this dissertation that it could not be left unexplored. For this reason, chapter III is dedicated to the analysis and deconstruction of the ontologies underlying social (movement) theories, which at the same time should assist a clearer understanding of my own. My ontological disagreement with traditional social theory focuses on how the ordering and



construction of categories and identities are presented as axiomatic conditions determining the analyses of social phenomena. Accordingly, in the first part of chapter III, I explore the foundations of the subjugation of difference to identity, which Foucault's work *The Order of Things* (2002) traces back to several epistemic moments. On the one hand, he highlights the progressive separation between the represented object and language marked by the birth of the Cartesian subject and the progressive mathematisation of language. On the other hand, Foucault (Ibid) presents Kantian transcendentalism, highlighting the definitive separation between the subject and the object of representation, where knowledge is situated on the outside within some a priori conditions that relate to each other in a given logic. This conception of the world suggests a definite separation between the logic of the transcendental and experience, which is from now only, recognised as secondary knowledge. Foucault then tries to recover the importance of immanence by refuting the hegemony of representationalism.

The second part of chapter III focuses on Deleuze's (2004) deconstruction of the image of thought which he redefines on the basis of a multiplicity of difference as its central idea. In so doing, he liberates difference from the tyranny of identity and rethinks being as multiple and going beyond the subject's point of view. Thus, placing positive difference at the centre of his project, he not only reaches a new understanding of ontology but also opens the door for the formation of new epistemological approaches, which focus on the fluidity of ideas as opposed to the immobility of the logos. Deleuze's work in *Difference and Repetition* (2004) re-thinks the image of thought beyond the point of view of the subject, inaugurating what he calls transcendental empiricism (immanence). Hence, the social can only be perceived through its differences, from which only its epistemological interpretations can be explained.

In chapter IV, I argue that feminist theories, especially intersectionality, queer and trans-feminist approaches, to a greater or lesser degree, surpass and redefine Deleuze's (Ibid) epistemological shift and re-think their own field on the bases of their becoming difference. However, they perform their analyses as situated bodies, from within their womanhood, not only developing new epistemological approaches based on a feminist subjectivity, but also a feminist ontology of the body. I do not only present these feminist approaches from a political stance, but I also claim feminist theories need to be taken into account within the general analyses of social (movements) theories. These theories are

not only relevant to their own field where have traditionally been contained, but they represent a serious analytical standpoint for the discussion of majoritarian social theories. I have presented here how feminist epistemologies and methods such as those from Haraway (1988, 1997) or Spry (2001) provide more creative and flexible tools within which framing the analyses of current resistance movements in Barcelona.

It is for the reasons explained above that I have developed a methodology based on participatory practices. In chapter V, I have presented a research method based on autoethnographic experience founded on the work of authors such as Spry (2000), Graeber (2009), Colectivo Situaciones' work with the Argentinian Crisis in 2001 and other authors such as Greenwood (2000) and Haraway (1988, 1997) and her view of the feminist subject. In this chapter I justify why I have used this methodological approach, referring back to a principle of coherence with the theoretical arguments presented in the previous chapter. Likewise, I review the research process and design in terms of the use of direct and secondary data gathering and the choice of interviewing methods I made. In so doing, I briefly present the data (table 1.) and agenda (Figure 1; Annex 1) which was followed for over six months whilst participating in CB and other actions in the neighbourhood of Sants-Montjuïc and Barcelona.

Further chapters, from VI to VIII, are dedicated to contextualising and analysing the insights of the case study. Soon after I began my research, I realised that resistance collectives in Barcelona are very closely related to struggles against the imposition of a market society, where the urbanism of the city plays a major role. Chapter VI, therefore, analyses this role by looking at Barcelona's urban development. I recall one of the workshops I participated in during April 2014, in which this topic was discussed from the point of view of a vastly heterogenic group of collectives and activists (mostly) from Barcelona, which gave special importance to criticism of the smart city. The last section in this chapter introduces the context of CB: from its origins as textile fabric in the XIX century, to the occupation strategy and self-management of its premises run by the neighbours of La Bordeta on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2011.

Consequently, I argue that CB was constituted as an autonomous self-organised space even before the building was occupied. It embraced the desires of the neighbours to manage their own resources and created a space for the neighbourhood which went beyond the capitalist administration. Thus, in chapter

VII, I analyse CB's internal processes, from its heterogenic composition (Figure 5.) of activists, groups and neighbours, to its decision-making methods and technologies as well as the conflicts that arise. I place special emphasis on how issues regarding gender and sexism are managed as well as any other type of sexual discrimination. Likewise, I focus on elements of power and control and the relation the negotiation commission maintains with external institutions. In chapter VIII, I focus on the links that CB maintains with the neighbourhood and Barcelona. I present two examples of how those relations develop alongside the events that took place in relation to the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and the eviction of Can Vies during the first months of 2014. Both of these events are deeply rooted in the history of Sants' resistance movements and actions.

Finally, chapter IX presents the most recognisable outcomes and arguments which have been woven over the course of this thesis focusing mainly on the theoretical decision for choosing CB as a case study. Here I revisit the problematic, flaws and debates regarding the production of academic knowledge and reflect on the importance that the concepts of minor, disqualified and subjugated knowledges have had in this thesis. The second part of chapter IX recalls Deleuze's concept of the rhizome in relation to CB's relationships and construction and resistance collectives in general. Finally, I conclude the chapter by clarifying my opinion on the major characteristics/outcomes of current resistance movements in Barcelona, that is, the embodiment of their own struggle in their daily lives. Resistance movements do not only form a social body composed of heterogeneity and difference but embrace the feminist sentence of Kate Millett that the "personal is political" as their own struggle. In so doing, I am certain to affirm the answer to this research question, which is that resistance movements in Barcelona do indeed challenge social (movements) theories.

### **Limitations encountered during this research**

As has been mentioned a few times already, though a criticism of social theory within the context of a PhD might seem contradictory, I believe it is the fact that I am not part of academia that allows me to occupy the space between fields or pass from one to the other, from academically produced knowledge to that produced by activists. The main limitation of this research consists in fitting within the constraints and demands of a PhD. However, I have found that the major difficulty in justifying the methodology used is mostly because of its

unconventionality. Autoethnographic research requires strong doses of self-reflection and ethical awareness in contrast to more traditional methodologies. For example, one could do field work for three months, prepare some interviews, attend some assemblies and leave, but I doubt this would reflect the complexity and richness of CB's processes unless one were to get involved directly in these processes. Had I taken this approach, I would probably have been much more orthodox, and my conclusions would have been pre-determined by various assumptions, which, in this regard, would have certainly made my own research process more straightforward. However, by participating in all these processes, I have been able to understand the motivations, backgrounds, fears and feelings underlying some of the decisions as well as difficulties that involve the principles of consensus and horizontality among truly heterogeneous groups. As a result, my analyses of CB have probably been more generous along with my criticism and honesty about the process of this research, as well as with those I have worked with as I already explained in chapter V. Because of this methodology, I have supported these limitations with theories and the work of well-established authors such as Haraway (1988, 1997), Graeber (2009), Spry (2001) and others who specialise in less neutral approaches and focus more on the point of view of the active subject-researcher. Overall, I have reinforced the theoretical support of this thesis in order to provide a strong argument for my participation in the field. In so doing, I must admit I have encountered less bibliography on autoethnography than one would expect from other approaches hence my decision to draw from other disciplines such as anthropology, the arts, etc.

Regarding the work of CB, as I have discussed over the course of this thesis, the limitations coincide with what can be regarded as the main conflicts. These lie in the lack of a deep political and ideological debate among the members and the difficulty of maintaining the necessary level of commitment and work when relying on voluntary work. In any case, these issues are currently being addressed. I have mentioned how current debates focus precisely on the economy (which is one of the future topics that will be discussed) and which type of work needs to be sustained. For example, there are many jobs in CB which cause some controversy, such as cleaning, the technical/logistical support for some activities, accompanying and following the pipeline of infrastructure improvements and reparations, etc. The discussion here focuses on whether and when to hire someone, for which jobs, under which conditions, whether we want

CB to be an employer and the political implications this would have in the future. As has been mentioned many times, while CB prides itself on being self-managed, because of the nature of some of the jobs, external expertise is also required. In such cases, someone is hired, though always after a debate and the agreement of the general assembly. However, this is only carried out according to certain conditions: first someone from within CB would be approached and if this is not possible someone from the neighbourhood would be asked for; second, a check will be made to see whether the materials used can be recycled or not; third, the company hired should be, if possible, ethically and politically in the same line of CB; and finally, wherever possible, it should be ecologically sustainable. The issue lies in the fact that these rules are not written down and are usually discussed along the way and due to the increasing growth and complexity of CB such issues arise more and more often. For this reason, a series of debates addressing those issues are underway. Thus during 2016, CB was constituted as an association in order to be able to manage the legal form of these procedures. Throughout 2017 the discussion focused on the economic management and employment which will continue during 2018.

From what has been explained above, it can be deduced that time constraints have also been one of my limitations. CB and resistance movements in Barcelona need to keep up with the time-speed of the city at the same time as trying to influence deep structural changes in society. Thus, the Zapatista motto “we walk, we do not run, because we travel far” is the best way to describe this. However, the coordination assembly (which meets once a week) is one of the elements of the decision-making process in charge of alleviating and lightening up the issues to be discussed in the general assembly.

The question of how to manage time brings us to the next point: CB’s bureaucracy. From the point of view of this research, CB is involved in between processes of territorialisation and deterritorialisation. The increasing organisation and bureaucratisation required in these decision-taking processes force CB to a certain professionalisation of their activism. This is also to be visualised more clearly with the inclusion of projects such as Coopolis which defines itself as hub of/for cooperatives aiming to promote, support and spread cooperativist knowledge related to social economy. Although CB members are aware that these are perhaps necessary processes, they are also conscious of the need for dissenting voices to be raised. This is usually expressed in corridor conversations

mostly but, as mentioned previously, is not debated openly as yet. In any case, it is very difficult to know or predict where these processes will bring them and after seven years, one would expect for new deterritorialisations to be accepted as a natural process within resistances' nomadic relations.

### **Reflections on future research**

When considering future research, I will once again have to divide it between theoretical and empirical practices. On the one hand, I should have in consideration how I could contribute to the field with regards to developing these research outcomes and concepts such as those of autonomy, resistances technologies and embodiment of resistances. On the other hand, I should reflect on what, as a researcher, might be my future contribution within resistance collectives. In any case, both areas should go alongside each other.

As mentioned before, I do not aim to construct any representative model, but it would be interesting to see whether we can talk in the same theoretical terms about previous movements or rural resistance movements in other areas of the globe and how the relationships between rural and urban resistance interact. Would it be possible to talk about similar resistance technologies without falling into a comparative approach? What about non-western and rural and feminist knowledges-practice's interrelations with westernised theory? According to my ontological perspective only embodied positive difference can be perceived and thus only a multiplicity of BwO can explain society. However, since I have expressed this ontology from the point of view of western philosophy, further exploration requires investigating whether there are other knowledges which provide other ontological explanations, for example, indigenous ontologies.

Consequently, from the questions posed above it can be deduced that theory cannot be separated from experience and they are—or should be—in horizontal and constant conversation with each other. Future research, I argue, should focus on the concept of knowledge or rather “minor knowledges” as well as the idea of resistance technologies in the sense I have given them throughout this thesis. Likewise, I am aware that the idea of the “embodiment” of resistance, which expresses the sense that political resistances are embedded in peoples' way of living in contraposition to the biopolitics of power, also needs further development.

Altogether, these discussions justify the need to find and develop different

methodologies, to step majoritarian social theory down from its pedestal of an “all-judging-god” and re-think and regain space in academia for the possibilities of other epistemologies. To put it another way, the role of the researcher-practitioner should be to become minor in order to escape from the self-referencing loop of academic research.

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## *Fieldwork participation schedule*

### **ANNEXES**

#### *Annexe 1. Fieldwork participation schedule*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Events in Barcelona</b>	<b>Assemblies in CB</b>	<b>Workgroup meetings</b>	<b>Sants Events</b>
09/09/13		Bloc Onze		
10/09/13		La Fondona		
18/10/13			Gender Observatory	
19/10/13		Coordination		
23/10/13		Bloc Onze		
24/09/13		La Fondona		
10/01/13	Starting October-trans		Mediation	
10/02/13		La Fondona		
10/07/13		Bloc Once		
11/10/13				Antifascist debates
12/10/13				Antifascist demonstration
14/10/13		Strategy		
16/10/13		La Fondona		
17/10/13			CB organisation chart	
21/10/13		Bloc Onze and projects		
24/10/13				Can Vies
25/10/13	Presentation of La Fondona in CFD			
23/10/13	Trans-demonstration			
28/10/13		Bloc Onze and projects		

## *Fieldwork participation schedule*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Events in Barcelona</b>	<b>Assemblies in CB</b>	<b>Workgroup meetings</b>	<b>Sants Events</b>
29/10/13			Mediation	
30/10/13		CB		
31/10/13		La Fondona		
05/11/13			Organisation chart	
07/11/13			Organisation chart	
09/11/13		Bloc Onze and projects		
11/11/13		La Fondona	Organisation chart	
13/11/13			Gender Observatory	
18/11/13		CB		
20/11/13		La Fondona		
23/11/13	Day against gender violence			Presentation of La Nau
25/11/13		Discussion regarding allocations in CB		
27/11/13		CB		
02/12/13		Transition		
04/12/13		La Fondona	Gender Observatory	
05/12/13		Coordination		
09/12/13		CB		
11/12/13			Gender Observatory	
16/12/13		Validation Projects		
17/12/13		La Fondona		
23/12/13		CB		

## *Fieldwork participation schedule*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Events in Barcelona</b>	<b>Assemblies in CB</b>	<b>Workgroup meetings</b>	<b>Sants Events</b>
<b>15/01/14</b>	Presentation of la Base	La Fondona	Cleaning Bar	
<b>25/01/14</b>		Validation + La Fondona		Presentation of Coopolis
<b>27/01/14</b>	Demonstration against transport fees increase	Project Validation		
<b>29/01/14</b>		A. Bloc Onze (cancelled because of Can Vies)/ Plaça de Sants assembly		Police register of Can Vies/ concentration and demonstration in support of CV
<b>28/01/14</b>				
<b>31/01/14</b>	Presentation of "Transfeminismes. Epistemes y otros flujos" (Espai Contrabandos)			concentration in support of 6 detainees for 12th Oct.
<b>30/01/14</b>	Demonstration against the anti-abortion law			
<b>01/01/14</b>				
<b>04/02/14</b>				
<b>05/02/14</b>		La Fondona		
<b>12/02/14</b>		La Fondona		
<b>18/02/14</b>	Eviction Carboneria		Cleaning Bar	
<b>19/02/14</b>			Cleaning Bar	
<b>20/02/14</b>		Coordination		
<b>25/02/14</b>		Library		
<b>27/02/14</b>		Bloc Onze		Surrounding the district building (CV)
<b>03/03/14</b>				Demonstration in support of CV
<b>04/03/14</b>				
<b>06/03/14</b>		La Fondona		

## *Fieldwork participation schedule*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Events in Barcelona</b>	<b>Assemblies in CB</b>	<b>Workgroup meetings</b>	<b>Sants Events</b>
<b>08/03/14</b>	Women's Day			
<b>10/03/14</b>		Project Validation		
<b>12/03/14</b>		CB extraordinary		
<b>17/03/14</b>	Demonstrations against gender violence			
<b>19/03/14</b>		La Fondona + CB extraordinary		
<b>20/03/14</b>		Coordination		
<b>21/03/14</b>				Demonstration in support of CV
<b>26/03/14</b>		CB extraordinary		District action in support of Can Vies
<b>27/03/14</b>	Demonstration for detainees in the Parliament	Coordination		
<b>28/03/14</b>				
<b>28/03/14</b>				
<b>02/04/14</b>		CB		
<b>03/04/14</b>		La Fondona + Assembly about Urbanism		
<b>04/04/14</b>			Barris Cooperatius workshop	
<b>05/04/14</b>			Barris Cooperatius workshop	
<b>09/04/14</b>			Working group regarding assembly methodology	
<b>12/04/14</b>	Campaign support Juan Andres			



**BARRIS COOPERATIUS**  
**CIUTAT COMUNA**

unes jornades per repensar-nos col·lectivament

4 d'abril, de 19 a 21h  
**Contra la Barcelona del diner**  
4 d'abril de 22 a 1h  
**concert (organitzat per Arquitecturas Colectivas)**

5 d'abril, de 10:30 a 14:00h  
**Com creem un barri cooperatiu?**  
5 d'abril, de 16 a 19h  
**Ciutat comuna**  
(+ dinar amb productes ecològics de Barrinar)

**A Can Batlló**  
**c/Constitució, 19 o**  
**c/Parcerisa, 17**

Cooperasec, Ateneu Cooperatiu La Base, Can Batlló, La Ciutat Invisible, Xarxa d'Economia Solidària, LaCol, Observatori Metropolità de Barcelona, Raons Públiques, COOP DC, sccl



## Projects Questionnaire

### Annexe 3. Projects Questionnaire

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Project Name:

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If you are a commission (understood as groups which provide management service and/or facilitate the functioning of *Can Batlló*)

If you are a project (*those groups which have aims as indicated in the project's questionnaire*)

Content/Function

Have you included new content and functions?

Allocation

Number of people in your group

Number of people managing the group

Number of people that have participated

Do you consider your work correctly?

Are you enough people to fulfil the tasks?

Do you feel you are part of CB community?

The relation between CB and the neighbourhood (which activities have you done in this sense?)

What activities do you expect to do next year?

Do you participate in the coordination assembly?

Do you participate in the general assembly?

Do you participate in extraordinary assemblies?

Do you participate in the cleaning schedule?

Internal management in hours

Hours dedicate to assemblies

Hours dedicated to activities in CB

Socio-economic viability

2014 accountancy

Common savings in CB

Expected in 2015

Common saving in CB

Others

Comments

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## Can Batlló's Gender Observation Chart

### Annexe 4. Can Batlló's Gender Observation Chart<sup>66</sup>

This is the tool for observing gender and assembly dynamics in Can Batlló. This observation will not provide proof of the name of any assistant or participant; it is completely anonymous.

The margin of error of this analysis will be determined after the observation has taken place by comparing the data of the two grids which have been filled up at the same time by two different people. (\_\_\_ %)

The boxes must be filled in with numbers or by an X (never with names or personal references)

The tasks at the assembly	Woman	Man
Who fills the gender observation grid		
Who records the minutes		
Who moderates the assembly		
Who takes the turn of the word		

Number of people and interventions in the assembly (put number)	Woman	Man
Number of people present		
Number of persons who have intervened		
Number of interventions		

\* This box is filled up once the assembly has ended. The number of all the interventions must be recorded (each intervention will count as one, even if it is the same person. That is, although a person speaks several times, all their interventions will be pointed out, without naming that the same person has made this). To count the numbers of interventions in the list where the speaking-turns are written down will be requested. From this list with the speaking-turns will be calculated the number of turns and divided between men and women.

\* **The person who moderates the assembly should also facilitate** (it helps to unlock the debate; recalls what has been said to move forward) and also should enumerate the agenda points, for this reason, the intervention of this person does not count as long she/he is exercising this role. However, it is important to write down when this person intervenes giving her/his personal opinion.

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<sup>66</sup> This chart has been translated by myself. Please note some parts have been modified in order to fit into editing standards of this PhD.

### *Can Battló's Gender Observation Chart*

The task at the assembly	Woman	Man
Informative	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Propositive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Questions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Provides answers	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Mediation	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Reflexive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Authoritarian	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Reminding the rules	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Expression of feelings	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Interruptions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Repetitions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Renounce to use the speaking turn	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Makes disqualifications	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Ask for apologies	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Direct interruptions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Indirect interruptions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Sexist use of language	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

## *Can Battló's Gender Observation Chart*

**Observations:** (reflect freely how you felt filling up this grid, what comments do you want to do and if possible, add some concrete examples of language and/ or sexist attitudes. Remember you should not mention any name.)

### Definitions used in the grid

<b>Informative</b> (provides new information regarding the discussed topic)
<b>Proposes</b> (makes concrete proposals; specifies that is proposing)
<b>Intervention to make a question:</b> (makes an open or concrete question)
<b>Intervention in order to answer:</b> (it answers a question or to an intervention...)
<b>Mediator</b> (someone who not being the moderator/facilitation intervenes in order to mediate in a discussion)
<b>Reflexive:</b> (someone who not being the moderator/facilitation reflects about the current discussion with the intention of closing the point)
<b>Decision-making</b> (someone who not being the moderator/facilitation points out that an agreement has been taken; asks whether an agreement has been reached; contributes to state what has been decided...)
<b>Authoritarian</b> (someone who says how things need to be done; speaks as if what is said is obvious and non-negotiable...)
<b>Reminding the rules</b> (that person who reminds the assembly to respect the speaking turns or that a decision has already been taken...)
<b>Expression of feelings</b> (discomforts, well-being...)
<b>Interruptions</b> (direct interventions without respecting the speaking turn or indirectly such as commenting with the colleague while someone else is talking, etc.)
<b>Repetitions</b> (someone repeats the same argument which has already been given by someone else)
<b>Renounce to use the speaking turn</b>

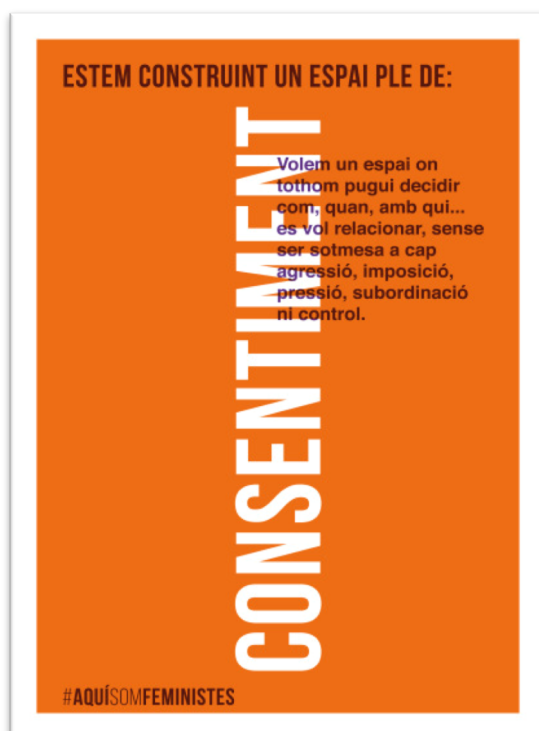
## Annexe 5. Posters against sexism



If I say, "I am not sure". No means No.



Sexism. It is the group of attitudes and practices which stereotype gender roles. It creates hierarchical relationships between men and women being privileged the firsts and excluding women and other identities.



Consent. We want a space where everybody can decide how, when and with who...wants to have a relationship without being submitted to any aggression, imposition, pressure subordination or control.



Care. We want a space where the lives of people and not the benefits are at the centre, a place where care, affections and that what is common is posit as a priority.

*Annexe 6. List of interviews*

<b>DATE</b>	<b>INTERVIEWEE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
27/02/2014	Member of Can Batlló	Barcelona
02/03/2014	CDOC	Barcelona
20/03/2014	LaCol	Barcelona
24/03/2014	Economy Commission	Barcelona
14/04/2014	Member of CB	Barcelona
17/10/2014	La Ciutat Invisible	Barcelona
28/11/2014	Neighbour and member of the neighbourhood association	Barcelona
11/11/2015	Eines	Barcelona
22/01/2016	La Borda	Barcelona
03/05/2016	Carpentry and La Borda	Barcelona
03/08/2016	Activities Commission	Barcelona
27/04/2016	School Arcadia	Barcelona
27/07/2016	Activities, Bar and Warehouse management	Barcelona
30/07/2016	Espai Contrabandos	Barcelona
15/02/2017	La Fondona	Barcelona

## **Collectives and other organisations**

### **Ateneu de 9 Barris**

It is situated in the neighbourhood of 9 Barris (9 neighbourhoods), and according to their webpage, it is socio-cultural centre occupied by the neighbours in 1977. The building was initially dedicated to the production of asphalt and was later abandoned. The neighbours occupied the building with the purpose of providing the community with a space for cultural activities, educations and social processes for social change. They are committed to the principles of horizontality, transparency, access to culture as common heritage, locality and autonomy. Among their objectives is to develop and compromise with artistic activities in the neighbourhood and the city as well as promoting the constructions of networks with social movements.

### **Banc Expropiat**

Situated in the neighbourhood of Gracia, it was occupied on the 22<sup>on</sup> of October 2011 in what it used to be a bank from Caixa Tarragona (later Caixa Catalunya) which had been closed due to the economic crisis and sold to vulture funds. Among their principle are the commitment self-management, resistance, and autonomy. Banc Expropiat used to welcome all types of projects committed to sharing knowledge and social change such as Indignated Feminists, Vila de Gracia Assembly, etc. Some of the workshops were language courses, theatre, dance, meditation, painting,

### **Barcelona Global**

According to their webpage, this is a private and non- profit association (130 city's companies, research centres, entrepreneurs, business school, etc.) They aim to make of Barcelona "one of the world's best cities for talent and economic activity" Under their vision; they highlight social responsibility, public and private cooperation, multidisciplinary and the commitment with the citizens.

### **Barcelona Growth**

Barcelona Growth used to be a local government institution dedicated to promoting Barcelona's business and brand internationally. Its motto is "Business creativity towards the world".

### **Barcelona Meeting Point**

That is an international fair and exhibition for real state professionals founded in 1997 which takes place every year. They also celebrate a symposium in which participate real state agencies and organisms such as APCE, Global Real Estate Institute, Urban Land Institute as well as business schools.

### **Barcelona Turisme**

Barcelona Turisme is local government agency dedicated to promoting tourism in Barcelona. It offers indications regarding directions and sights advice but also shopping areas and gastronomic recommendations.

### **Biblioteques Socials**

Self-managed libraries, archives and documentation centres in Catalonia and the Valencian Country. They are independent of any official institutions and constituted mostly with publicly donated materials. These are linked to the social movements' network and aim to promote alternative ways of reading, especially those related to social change as well transforming people's consciousness through these processes.

### **Ca La Dona**

Ca La Dona is located in the Gothic Quarter. It started with the occupation of a building in 1987 and in 1988, in agreement with the local government, was constituted as an organisation. That is feminist space dedicated to the critical reflection and of feminist participation and proposals. It is organised via commissions and assemblies where decisions are being taken.

### **Calala**

That is a feminist foundation located in Eixample which promotes women participation and empowerment in Latin America, Caribic and the Spanish State through the mobilisation of resources towards collectives, "networks and movements". Their vision is to transform relation between men and women into more equalitarian ones.



### **Can Masdeu**

That is an occupied space since 2001 situated on the outskirts of Barcelona at the feet of Collserola Natural Park. The building and its surroundings which belong to San Pau Hospital occupies 35 hectares. They are committed to the principles of self-organisation, management, autonomy. According to their webpage under their vindications is the eco-agricultural management and reclamation of the public spaces for the neighbours of the Collserola Valley.

### **CFD**

Opened in 2012 in Poble Sec CFD is a space of reflection and debate dedicated to the narratives of photography. They offer programs and courses concerning these topics as well as welcoming projects and conferences.

### **Cúrcuma**

Cúrcuma is located in a social centre (centre Cívica El Sortidor) in Poble Sec. It is a Project dedicated to facilitating the acknowledgement of “identities, desires and ways of doing” having diversity and creativity as the motor of their actions. They focus on the transformation of gender violence as well as promoting gender perspectives, feminism and community relationships. Among their values, they highlight creativity, horizontality, participation, cooperation and care, etc.

### **Espai Obert**

This space is situated in Sants, and it exists since 1995. It aims to provide a structure to other collectives and social movements working towards social transformation and which do not agree with the current socio-urban model.

### **Feministas Indignadas**

Born in from the 15-M in Barcelona, *feministes indignades* agglutinates individuals and collectives focused on feminist related topics to coordinate collective actions and strategies.

### **La Base**

Opened in 2013 La Base, located in Poble Sec, is a project which based on autonomous principles, aims to recover spaces and infrastructures in the neighbourhoods of Barcelona. In so doing are influenced by previous movements

in Barcelona during the first half of the XX century such as Anteneu, Consumer cooperatives, etc.

### **La Burxa**

La Burxa is an alternative newspaper born in 1998 in the neighbourhood of Sants and self-managed by volunteers. It is a project linked to squatted centres in the neighbourhood, especially Can Vies and later on it expanded on topics and readers targeted to other collectives for social change as well as the neighbourhood.

### **La Casa Invisible**

That is old and abandoned historic building in Malaga city centre that was recovered and refurbish (still in process) by a group of people in 2007. According to their webpage their objectives are: a. to strengthen processes of self-management and autonomy within social movements; b. to create a “laboratory of cultural experimentation” base on criteria of cooperation and free share of knowledge; c. to promote processes of knowledge exchange focusing on critical thinking, social creativity and social actions; d. experimentation with models of management, radical democracy and citizen participation.

### **La Flor de Maig**

That is a collective located in Poble Nou in what it used to be the “Cooperative Society for Saving and Consuming Flor de Maig” which was created in 1890 and later on expropriated. After Franco’s dictatorship, it was converted in Anteneu and the price of the rent being paid by the local government. In 2012 the local government communicated the rent payment was going to be stopped thus; the first of June 2012 the Ateneu was closed. In October, a few months later, the neighbours occupied the building and created the platform to recover Flor de Maig with similar strategies used but CB. Related to this last one, Flor de Maig reached a new agreement with the local government and is organised in projects and commissions around a general assembly. Likewise, is driven by the principles of self-organisation and autonomy aiming to provide the neighbourhood with services and equipment beyond the consumerist society.

### **La Lleialtat Santesca**

That is a building located in Sants managed by a coordinator group composed of the neighbourhood associations and other collectives of Sants. The building is dated from 1891 and used to be a consumer cooperative. It aims to promote community action, cooperation, respect as well as developing strategies for change in the neighbourhood of Sants. It is divided between the cultural, cooperatives and neighbourly spaces. Regarding the management, this is splits between the Forum, Commissions, community action, communication activity schedule, economy, and other commissions.

### **La Col**

Architect's cooperative located in Sants which envision architecture as a tool for social change and as a way to intervene critically in the environment. They promote another city model, the use and recovery of public spaces.

### **Mobile World Congress**

It is an exhibition and conference which brings together to manufactures, providers, and mobile related industry in general. It takes place every year in the in Barcelona's events fair which is located in the neighbourhood of Hospitalet.

### **Mums**

Movement for Sexual Diversity is a non-institutional organisation in Chile which promotes LGBTIQ+ rights. Their mission, according to their web page is to encourage change and actions toward the elimination of barriers "through activism, political incidence, research". Their vision is a more inclusive and pluralist society.

### **Negres Tempestes**

Anti-capitalism collective with anarchist and (Catalan) independentism character. However, they do not perceive themselves as a homogeny group. They are located in Sants and used to meet in Can Vies.

### **Observatori Metropolità de Barcelona**

Collective of militant researchers who do research on the city and the

consequences of urbanism planning and policies.

### **PICU, Plataforma d'Inciatives Culturals Urbanes de València**

PICUV is born in Valencia in 2015 and constituted as a federation in 2017. It is a platform composed of 10 cultural festivals (theatre, design, music, dance, etc.) aiming to revitalised different areas of the city and its surrounding.

### **Pikara Magazine**

Pikara is digital newspaper focused on feminism. They propose to different journalism with histories and topics which usually do not appear in the news. They are based in the Basque Country, but the paper edition can be found in the whole State. Their contents characterise for compromising with the quality, dynamism, gender perspective and political compromise.

### **Project EVA, Espacio Vecinal Arganzuela**

This project is located in Madrid in an old fruit and vegetable market in Legazpi (one of Madrid neighbourhood). Initially, it was constituted by 70 people who met in Matadero (another collective in Madrid) on the 24th of September 2014. Its composition is very heterogenic and the members come from different backgrounds related to social movements, neighbourhood associations and other collectives. This space is also ceded to the neighbours by the local government. EVA is a self-managed project which aims to recover the area for the neighbours by providing all sort of cultural activities, but they are at the very early stages and are still negotiating with the local government some aspects of it.

### **Rosa de Foc**

Self-managed and autonomous space located in Gracia since 2002. They define themselves as an affinity group in order "to construct community through actions and critical thought". It is managed through assemblies and among their principles and topics the use of alternative practices, agroecology, solidarity, exchange networks, anticapitalism, etc can be highlighted. They hub other projects such as La Tofona, consume group Verduretes, DesaCORd and Telefon Roig among others.

### **Raons Públiques**

Cooperative specialised in urbanism and participation located in Poble Sec. The started in 2009 as group project within Architects without Borders and become the association Raons Públiques in 2012. Since 2015 they are a cooperative.

### **Re-creant Cruilles**

They define themselves as a heterogenic platform articulated in what the call Espai Germanetes. This is an empty area on the left of L'Eixample where it used to be a convent which was toppled in 2004. They aim to reactivate a space in favour of creating collectively a space for the neighbourhood and social changed.

### **Se Va Armar la Gorda**

It is a platform dedicated to organising feminist actions for women, lesbian and trans.

### **TMB**

The management company for Barcelona's city transport. It is composed by Barcelona's Metropolitan Railroad, SA and Barcelona Transports, SA which manage underground and buses transportation in the city. Likewise, it leads other services such as Montjuic's cable car and other products.

### ***Can Batlló Projects and Commissions***

Project/Commission Name	Role/Activity	Members	
		Women	Men
<b>Activities Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of request for space internally and externally</li> <li>- Management of recurring activities</li> <li>- Organisation and coordination of workshops</li> <li>- Management of artistic residences</li> <li>- Productions of own activities and shows (cabaret, etc.)</li> <li>- Promotion of events and other celebrations (parties, anniversaries, etc)</li> </ul>	8	3
<b>Arcadia School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School</li> </ul>	4	2
<b>Arts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote and manage artistic activities and workshops</li> </ul>	9	4
<b>Artisan Brewers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Production of artisan beer</li> <li>- Part of CB economic system</li> <li>- Creations of space for self-management and learning beer productions process</li> </ul>	0	4
<b>Audiovisuals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The laboratory which emerges in relation to the communications of Can Batllo</li> <li>- Intend to place online editing and recording set in their allocated space</li> <li>- A video-archive of Can Batllo</li> </ul>	5	3
<b>Bar Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bar services</li> <li>- Opening/closing space of encounter (referring to the ground floor of Bloc 11 where the bar is allocated)</li> <li>- Custody and control of the keys to common spaces</li> </ul>	15	10
<b>Carpentry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open carpentry atelier</li> </ul>	0	5
<b>Climbing group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leisure and sports activity</li> </ul>	2	15
<b>Collective Printing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Printing and graphic arts workshop</li> </ul>	4	6
<b>Coopolis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotes economy of Block 4 of Can Batllo</li> <li>- Double function: guiding the neighbourhood about how to start a company and; a hub providing training for companies interested in social economy.</li> </ul>	1	3

Project/Commission Name	Role/Activity	Members	
<b>Design Group</b>	- Design and refurbish common areas - Coordination of collective work and Barcelona Activa	6	1
<b>Documentation Centre</b>	- Compilation of Barcelona's historical memory of social movements	1	3
<b>Economy</b>	- Managing of CB accountancy		1
<b>Gardens and Allotments</b>	- Creation and maintenance of gardens and allotments in CB	4	7
<b>Infrastructure</b>	- Construction, repair and maintenance of Can Batllo	1	13
<b>La Borda</b>	- Housing cooperative	15-20	30-35
<b>La Canya</b>	- Professional formation and practices through CB commissions and projects	3	0
<b>La Fondona</b>	- Feminist, Lgtb+ and queer documentation centres - Creation of awareness - Promotion of activities, workshops and actions.	9	4
<b>La Nau</b>	- Generate a playing area for children between 0 to 6-year-old and their families - Promote visibility of childhood in CB - Create and promote participation as well as care among participants.	7	1
<b>Library</b>	- To provide service as a neighbourhood library	17	9
<b>Mobility</b>	- Mobility workshop dedicated to self-repairing different types of vehicles such as cars, motorcycles, bikes and vehicles for reduced mobility users.	4	12
<b>Negotiation</b>	- Take care of the relationships between CB and government institutions.	0	3
<b>Secretary</b>	- Receive and responds requests regarding information and general consultations. - Welcoming of new projects. - Re-orient consultations related to specific commissions and projects.	1	2
<b>Space for Musical Creation</b>	- Permanent area for musical creation in La Bordeta dedicated to promotions of concerts, rehearsals, development and broadcasting of networks and musical projects.	4	32

Project/Commission Name	Role/Activity	Members	
<b>Strategy</b>	- Proposes strategic suggestions in relation to the institutions which will be consulted with the coordination and general assembly.	0	5
<b>Storage</b>	- Management and organisation of CB's storage.	0	2
<b>ZonaOnze</b>	- Artistic activity	4	2